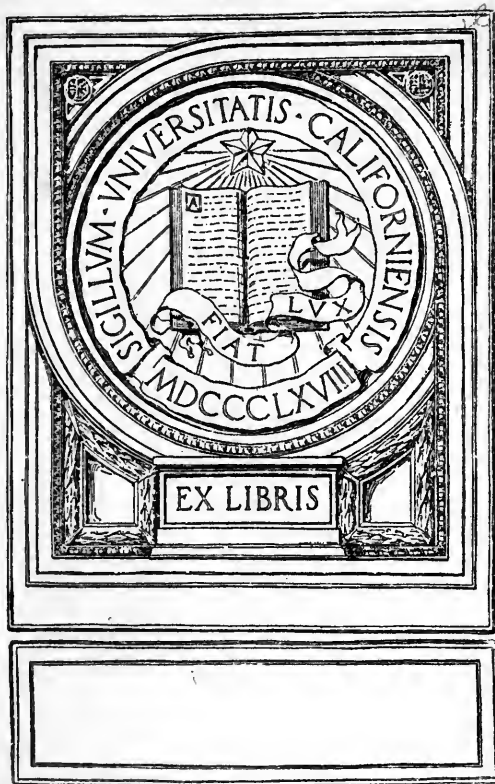
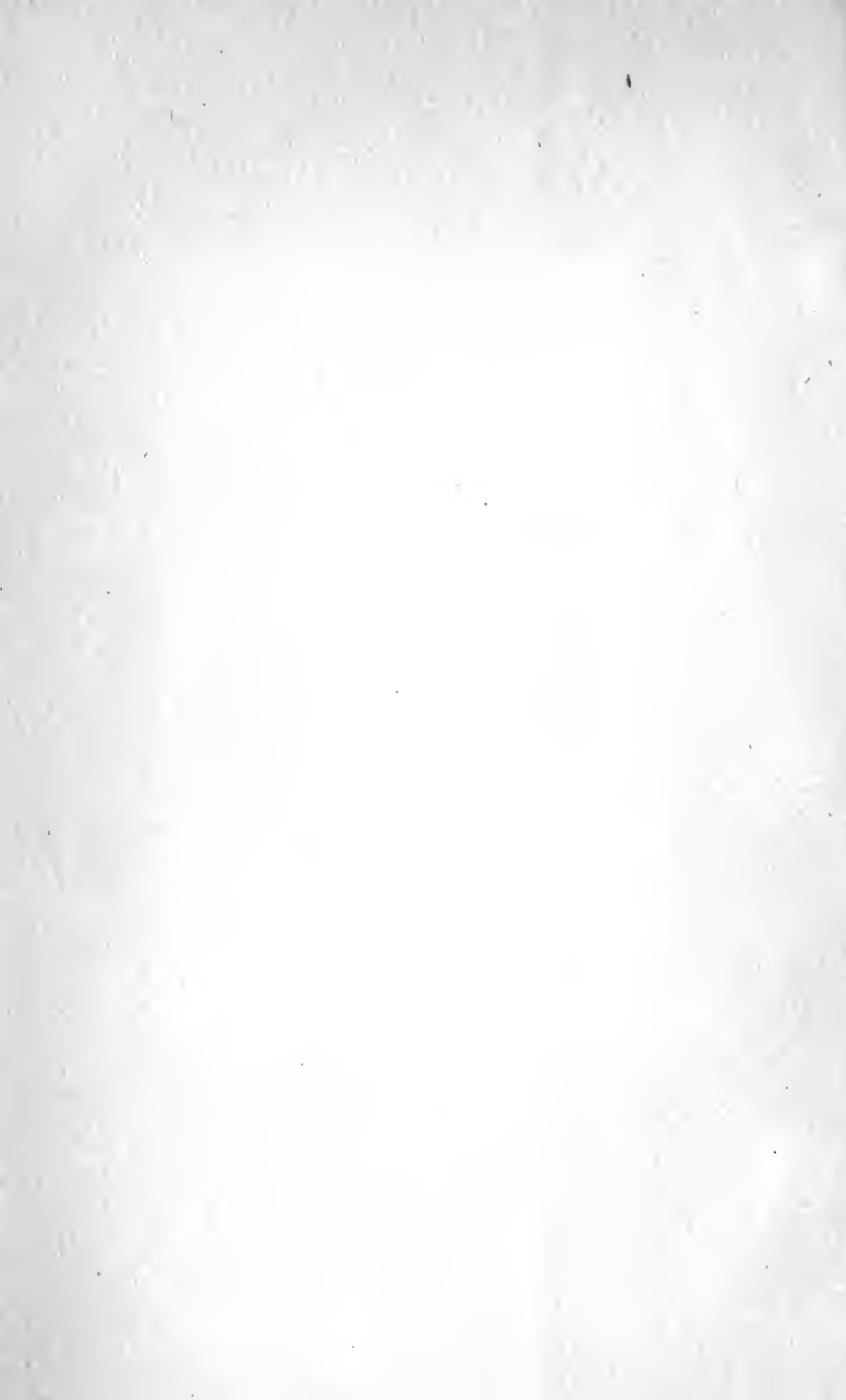


THE
ABBÉ EDGEWORTH
AND HIS FRIENDS





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THE
ABBE
EDGEWORTH





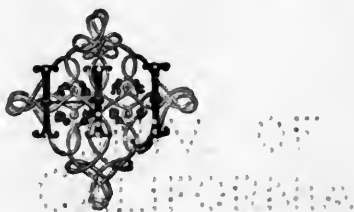
Photo. Neudron

The. Abbé Edgeworth
from an old print

THE ABBE EDGEWORTH AND HIS FRIENDS

BY
VIOLETTE
M. MONTAGU

WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE
FRONTISPIECE AND SIXTEEN
OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS



THE ABBE EDGEWORTH, FACING WHAT HE
BELIEVED TO BE CERTAIN DEATH, TOWERS
HEAD AND SHOULDERS OVER HIS COUNTRYMEN.
Englishmen in the French Revolution : J. G. ALGER.

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TO THE
ANCHOR

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INTRODUCTION

“ **T**U proverai sì come sa di sale
Lo pane altrui e com' è duro calle
Lo scendere e 'l salir per l'altrui scale.” *

Thus wrote Dante in that great poem of a pilgrimage, the *Divina Commedia*.

The history of the human race is the story of exile ; it is full of anecdotes of dethroned kings, vanquished warriors, disappointed politicians, persecuted sectarians, zealous crusaders, all sufferers for religious or political opinions. The very first chapter closes in exile : our first parents were exiles in the fullest sense of the word.

Poets of all nations have found this theme inexhaustible ; Homer, Seneca, Virgil, Dante, Petrarch, Goethe, Schiller, Lenau, Uhland, Victor Hugo, Ronsard, Byron, Shakespeare, Walt Whitman, Firdusi, Hafiz, wrote their sweetest songs while the white dust of the high-road was still clinging to their weary feet, while their eyes were still strained with searching the wide horizon for a shelter, an oasis which, all too often, proved but a mirage in the desert.

The subject of this study, the Abbé Edgeworth, was early forced to grasp the staff and wander forth to unknown lands. It is not often that exiles have been so persistently persecuted by Fate as he was. In his childhood he was

* Paradiso : Canto xvii

taken from the home which had become uninhabitable, owing to family dissensions caused by a diversity of religious convictions ; and later, in the heyday of life he was forced, in consequence of his devotion to a losing cause, to flee from his adopted country, and to live and die an exile in " a land of ice and snow."

In those less known but equally beautiful lines, Dante glories in the hardships endured for a good cause :

" L'esilio che m'è dato, onor mi tegno . . .
Cader co' buoni è pur di lode degno."*

Opinions differ as to the merits of the men with whom the Abbé Edgeworth suffered exile ; Louis XVIII. could scarcely be numbered among the *buoni*, but the Abbé certainly merited the title of a *good man* which, in one of his earliest letters, he expressed a wish to earn.

The Fate which led him through so many countries caused him to become acquainted with many interesting men ; his friends ranged from the Czar, Paul I. of Russia, to the humble, but most devoted servant, Louis Bousset.

As father-confessor to Madame Elisabeth de France he beheld the dawn of the Revolution ; as the consoler of a dying monarch he experienced persecution at the hands of that monarch's former subjects ; as the chaplain of a royal exile he gave his life for some of Napoleon's soldiers, members of the Grand Army.

"Heureux qui comme Ulysse a fait un beau voyage . . .
Et puis est retourné, plein d'usage et raison,
Vivre entre ses parents le reste de son âge !"

sang Joachim du Bellay, nearly four hundred years ago.

Gladly would the Abbé Edgeworth have turned his

* Canz : xvii.

steps homeward to live the rest of his life with the friends of his childhood, but for him the word duty had a deeper significance than friendship, and so he lies forgotten in a humble grave amid the snows of Russia.

In writing this life of the Abbé Edgeworth, I have found the works of MM. Ernest Daudet and H. Forneron of the greatest value. I beg to acknowledge my indebtedness to these gentlemen, to Mrs. Butler of 14, Norham Gardens, Oxford, for kindly allowing me to include the Abbé's two letters to Mr. Alexander Dick (pages 223 and 284), and likewise to M. Louis Michaud of Paris for so courteously allowing me to reproduce the portrait of the Abbé Edgeworth which appears in M. Albert Savine's work, "*Madame Elisabeth et ses amies.*"

VIOLETTE M. MONTAGU.

Paris. *March*, 1913.

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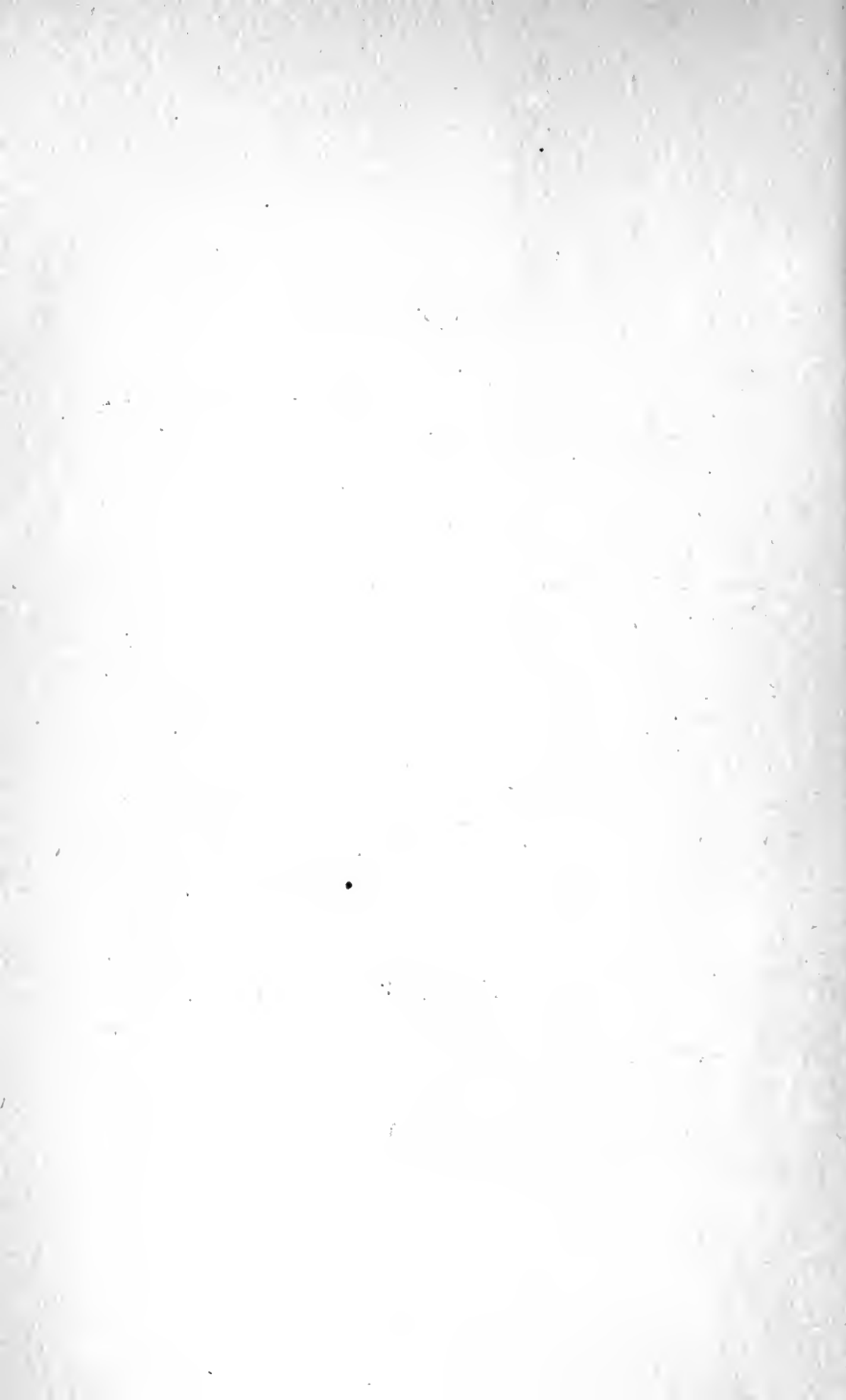
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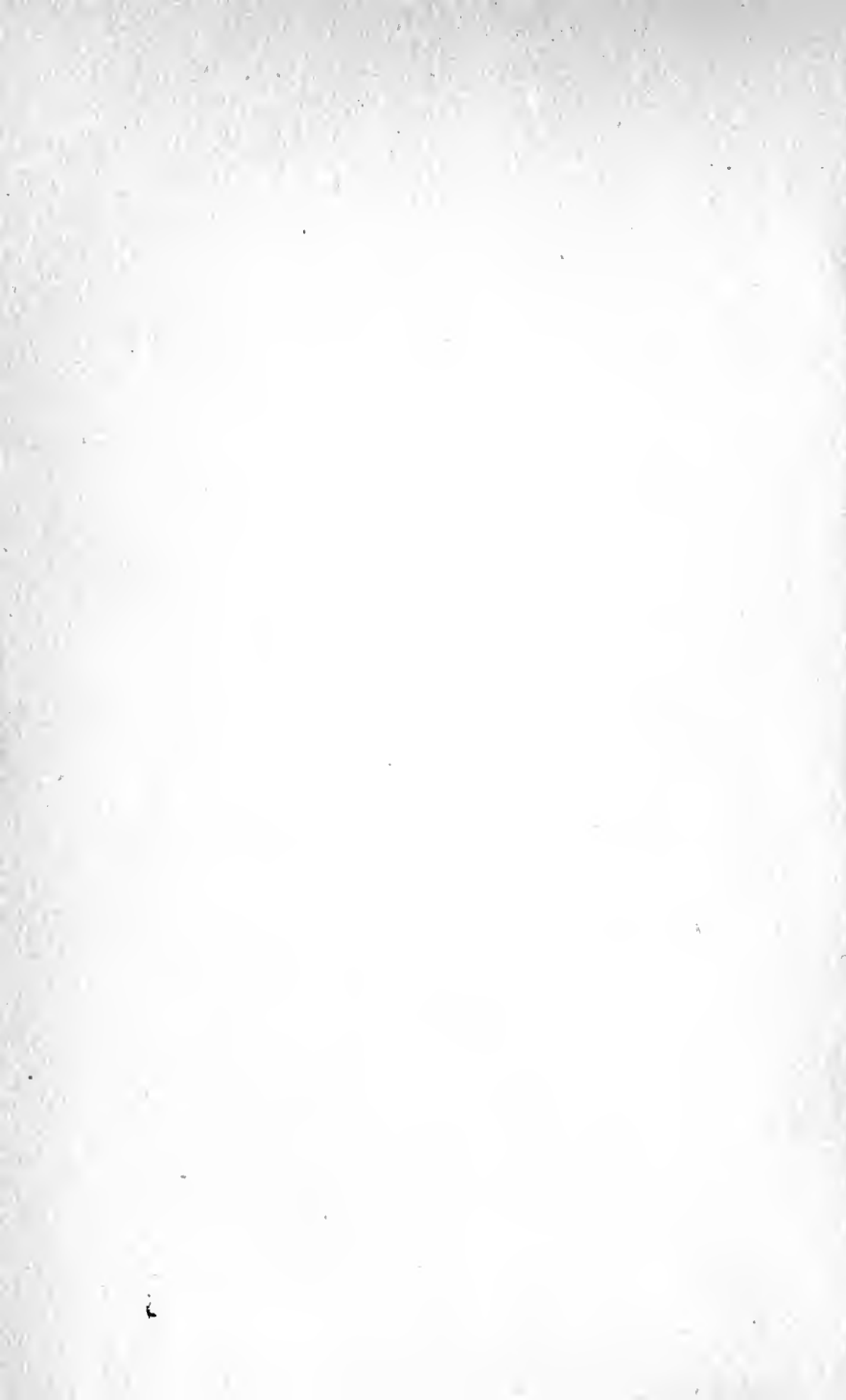
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THE
ABBE
EDGEWORTH



THE ABBE EDGEWORTH

CHAPTER I

The Edgeworth family : Mr. Robert Edgeworth changes his religion and goes to reside in France : Childhood and education of Henry Essex Edgeworth : He completes his studies in Paris : He ministers to his compatriots in the French capital : His health suffers owing to hard work : He is invited to return to Ireland : The dawn of the Revolution : The first *émigrés* : The "Simple Life" proves powerless to stem the encroaching tide : Religion loses its prestige : The Emigration : Different receptions accorded by different countries to the *émigrés* : Children left behind in France : The meeting.

THE name of Edgeworth is familiar to the literary world through the writings of Maria Edgeworth, whose "Parents' Assistant" and "Fashionable Tales" once rivalled in popularity Mme. de Genlis' "Tales of the Castle" and Mrs. Sherwood's "History of the Fair-child Family," with their haunting pen-pictures of pastoral scenery and the delights of a country life. They told of days when our grandparents addressed their fathers and mothers as "sir" and "madam," when consumption was cured by a more or less lengthy sojourn in an evil-smelling cow-house, and when vice was punished and virtue rewarded in the most approved style. How many children those dear books delighted ! and how much pleasure and

amusement they might still afford us—if we could only find time to read them !

Maria's father, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, was a remarkable man in more ways than one. Not only was he an author—Maria certainly inherited her literary gifts from him—among his works being some memoirs and several learned treatises upon scientific and educational subjects ; but he was also the reputed discoverer of aerial telegraphy, and, what was more, his ever active brain imagined an engine which was to run upon two parallel rails, drawing a little cart with grooved wheels—the first railway. Being possessed of some fortune, he was able to devote much of his leisure to agricultural improvements on his estate of Edgeworthstown, in the county of Longford, Ireland.

The life story of Maria's cousin, Henry Essex Edgeworth, known in France as the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont, deserves to be better known in his native land, and in the country which sheltered him, and which he learnt to love so dearly. His claims to fame lie in the fact that he risked his own life in order to minister to the unfortunate Louis XVI. during his last moments, and that he himself nearly perished on the scaffold in consequence of his devotion to the royal family of France.

The Edgeworths trace their ancestry back to two brothers, Francis and Edward Edgeworth, who went to Ireland presumably from England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The elder brother, Francis, later became clerk of the hanaper, and gave his name to Edgeworthstown, while the younger was appointed bishop of Down and Connor. Francis eventually married and had

a son, John, who became a captain in the army, and married twice ; the name of his first wife is unknown, but shortly after her death he married a certain Mistress Bridgman, the relict of Edward Bridgman of Lancashire, brother to the Lord Keeper of the Seals. Captain Edgeworth had a numerous family, chiefly composed of sons, one of whom was the ancestor of the present branch of the Edgeworth family.

Captain John Edgeworth was knighted in Whitehall by James, Duke of York, in 1671, an honour which he did not appreciate fully, for a few years later he raised a regiment to support the cause of William III. The Edgeworths were a thoroughly Protestant family, and no doubt Captain Edgeworth considered it his duty to do all that lay in his power to place the throne in the hands of a Protestant ruler. Captain Edgeworth was afterwards made colonel of his regiment, with his eldest son as lieutenant-colonel, and his sons Robert and Henry as captains. His fifth son, Essex, the grandfather of the Abbé, became a student at Dublin University ; after passing all his examinations most brilliantly he was ordained, and received the living of Granard, in the county of Longford ; here he lived some time, doing much good, and earning the love and esteem of his poor parishioners. His wife, Mistress Edgeworth, a daughter of Sir Robert Kring of Rockingham, in the county of Roscommon, seconded him in every way. His fame as a preacher and as a pastor devoted to the well-being of his little flock reached the ear of Mr. Goodwin, Bishop of Kilmore and Ardagh, who, thinking to reward the faithful servant, gave him the living of Temple Michael, reputed to be one

of the most valuable in the diocese. On going to thank his benefactor for this proof of his esteem, Mr. Edgeworth was told that he alone, as the most hard-working clergyman in the diocese, was worthy to occupy this post. Thus this excellent pastor of souls was enabled with his increased income to enlarge the sphere of his good works.

The Rev. Essex Edgeworth's eldest son, Robert, also became a clergyman, and was for some time rector of Edgeworthstown. He married a grand-daughter of Archbishop Usher, or Ussher, as Edmund Burke writes it, and sister to another Ussher* who wrote "The Free-thinker's Letters," long since forgotten. Archbishop Ussher was a celebrated prelate and historian, being the author of many learned works, among others "De Ecclesiarum Christianarum Successione et Statu," "Chronologia Sacra," and the celebrated "Britannicarum ecclesiarum antiquitates" which drew down the wrath of the Holy Father upon his head, and was duly cursed and placed upon the Index. In his "Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti," published in London 1650-1654, he denounced the theory that the world was created 4,004 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. The rebellion of 1648 drove this learned man from his see, and he was forced to leave Ireland and to take refuge in England. More fortunate than many of his compatriots, he was able to save his beloved library, which he had spent much of his time and his fortune in collecting, and to take it with him into exile. He died in 1656.

* One of the Abbé's kinsmen, Admiral Sir Thomas Ussher, escorted Napoleon to exile. He must have treated his prisoner kindly, for the Emperor, while at Elba, inquired of Lord Edrington for his "good friend Ussher."

Henry Essex Edgeworth, son of the Rev. Robert Edgeworth, and the subject of this study, was born at Edgeworthstown in 1745. Three years after his birth his father, forsaking the faith of his ancestors, became a Catholic; he did not take this important step, however, without many severe struggles with his conscience. Before making his final decision, he engaged in frequent controversies with other Protestant clergymen, and, as a matter of conscience, studiously avoided conversing with any Catholic persons, lest they should prejudice him in favour of their faith. One day, on ascending into the pulpit to deliver his usual Sunday discourse, he was so overwhelmed by all the doubts which were surging through his brain at that time, that he was unable to utter a single word and was forced to leave the pulpit; he never spoke again in any Protestant church.

Having confided his flock to the charge of the bishop of the diocese, he went to Dublin and begged a priest to prepare him for his reception into the Catholic Church, and solemnly renounced all connection with his former faith. It must have been some consolation to him during these weeks of uncertainty to know that his wife thought with him; indeed she soon followed his example and became a Catholic.

The Edgeworth family, on learning of this sudden and unexpected step, overwhelmed him with reproaches. It seemed incredible that a member of such a thoroughly Protestant family would dare to become a convert—a pervert, as they termed it—to the Catholic faith. Mr. (now no longer the Rev.) Robert Edgeworth, realising that his career in Ireland was at an end, determined to go

abroad and begin life again. He left his native land in 1749, taking with him his wife, his two elder sons, Robert and Henry Essex, and his little daughter, Betty; the youngest child, Ussher, was not considered old enough to travel, and was confided to some kind-hearted relatives whose religious convictions did not forbid them to bestow care and affection upon the little papist.

The Catholic Church made other converts about this time, for Mrs. Edgeworth's brother, the author of the "Freethinker's Letters," decided, notwithstanding the opposition of his grandfather, to follow his sister's example. He applied to a Jesuit priest, Father Fitz-Simons by name, by whom he was prepared for his reception into the Catholic Church, and, before many months had passed, took Holy Orders and left his native land for London, where he eventually died.

Before bidding farewell to the dear home where they had been born and where they had spent their early childhood, Robert Edgeworth's children were assembled in the house of the steward of the Edgeworth estate to say good-bye to their little cousins. So sad and solemn was this farewell meeting that the memory of it lingered for many years in their minds, and especially in the mind of Henry Essex, who, although only four years of age at that time, already possessed a very retentive memory.

On leaving Ireland, Mr. Edgeworth confided the care of his property, which was sufficiently valuable to support him and his family in a quiet way abroad, to an agent whom he believed he could trust; but in this he was mistaken.

Toulouse was chosen as a suitable place in which to

educate his little flock. When sufficiently old, Henry and his elder brother attended the University of Toulouse, where the former made a lifelong friend in the person of John Moylan, a compatriot and a native of Cork. Having completed his studies in rhetoric and *belles lettres* at Toulouse, Henry, at the recommendation of his friend Moylan, went to Paris, where he took up his abode at the Collège des Trente-trois, which was founded in 1640 in honour of the thirty-three years of our Lord's life, by the Abbé Claude Bernard, styled "the poor priest," for the education of thirty-three poor scholars. Henry Essex attended lectures in philosophy and theology at the Sorbonne and at the Collège de Navarre, one of the most celebrated and most austere colleges in Paris. The young student, who came of a peculiarly amiable family, soon endeared himself to the principal of the Collège des Trente-trois to whose care he had been specially recommended. His family also moved to Paris about this time.

His studies completed, he took Holy Orders and went to reside at the Séminaire des Missions étrangères in the rue du Bac. The Abbé was known in future as the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont, from Firmount, near the family place, Edgeworthstown, in Ireland. It was his intention about this time to become a missionary abroad, but he was dissuaded from embracing this dangerous career. He then devoted himself to his work in Paris, hearing confessions daily, visiting and instructing the poor of his parish, and especially devoting himself to the poor Irish; his spare moments—and they cannot have been many—were spent in prayer and meditation. Always bright and cheerful, he endeared himself to all who knew

him ; although he himself declares that he had no talent for preaching, his sermons were always earnest and couched in simple, straightforward language.

In 1766 he had a serious loss, for his friend, Dr. Moylan, left Paris and returned to Cork. Before bidding farewell to his friend the Abbé de Firmont, Dr. Moylan tried to persuade him to return with him to his native land ; but the Abbé, who during his long sojourn in France had nearly forgotten his native tongue, being, in fact, unable to speak or write English fluently, refused, pleading as his excuse that he found immense difficulty in making himself understood by the poor Irish in Paris, and he feared that he would not be able to understand the Irish peasantry or make them understand him. Besides, he had practically ceased all communication with the mother-country. His knowledge of human nature had already taught him the truth of the saying : " Out of sight, out of mind," poetically expressed by a celebrated German author as follows :

" When we leave a place where we have been something or somebody, we imagine that we shall find everything as we left it on our return. We think that the world will stand still for our pleasure, and that our place is still waiting for us. But there are no empty places in life ; in reality no chair ever remains vacant." *

The Abbé felt that his foreign education had rendered him unfit to occupy the position of rural priest, and so he decided to remain in France, where at least he could make himself understood and where he was extremely useful. However, Dr. Moylan still pressed his demand and even asked the Holy Father's permission to take the Abbé back

* Baron von Grimm : " Der Landschaftsmaler."

to Ireland. But the Abbé would not be persuaded, and Dr. Moylan was obliged to bid farewell to his friend, and to be content with receiving, from time to time, interesting letters telling him of all the great events which were beginning to awaken France from her lethargy. In one of these letters, written in quaint terms, half French, half English, the Abbé mentions the Collège des Irlandais, then a prosperous institution, established in 1680 in the old Collège des Lombards in the rue des Carmes, Paris, originally built in the 14th century for Italian students (mostly from Lombardy) and founded by André Ghini, a native of Florence and Bishop of Arras. During the reign of Louis XII. this Collège des Lombards had as principal the celebrated Hellenist Jérôme Aleandre. Under Francis I., the college possessed a valuable printing-press, upon which the second part of the Hebrew grammar and the "Explication des Psaumes," both by Agathio Guidacerio, professor of Hebrew at the Collège Royal, were printed. A few years later, in this same Collège des Lombards, the first disciple of Ignatius de Loyola found shelter. The Italian students becoming fewer and fewer during the reign of Louis XIV., that monarch allowed the building to be sold to some Irish priests, who directed the Collège des Irlandais with much success until the French Revolution closed it, together with many other foreign communities. The college had many neighbours, such as the Collèges des Grassins, de Fortet, de Lisieux, de Rheims, de Montaignu, de Navarre, d'Upsal, and de la Marche. Indeed, the Sorbonne, with its numerous colleges and institutions clustering at its feet, might be likened to a hen with her chickens gathered under her protecting wings.

In 1769 the Abbé's father died, and his widow returned to Ireland with her sons Robert and Ussher (who had joined his family in France some years before) and her daughter Betty, when Mr. John Moylan, the father of the Abbé's friend, who eventually became Bishop of Kerry, invited her to stay with him for some time. Some authorities declare that Mrs. Edgeworth experienced unkind treatment at the hands of certain members of her husband's family; one even asserts that the dead man's Protestant relations tried to dispossess Mr. Edgeworth's widow and children of their rightful heritage, which behaviour determined Mrs. Edgeworth to sell all her property in Ireland and return to France. This she did as soon as possible, choosing as her home the Couvent des Récollets,* and here she lived with her daughter Betty for some years, a peaceful life, indeed, made sweet by the presence and affection of her son, the Abbé Edgeworth, who lived in the Séminaire des Missions étrangères in the rue du Bac.

Owing to his labours for the welfare of the indigent English and Irish in Paris, the Abbé, soon after his mother's return, fell ill, and was ordered to take a rest: this order he obeyed very reluctantly. To this illness he refers in a letter to his friend, Dr. Moylan, who had just been made Bishop of Cork: this preferment had not been accomplished without protest, probably accompanied by one of those lively scenes for which the Irish people have always been famous.

* The Couvent des Récollets, or Recueillis, so called from the Franciscan monks who first settled in Spain (1484), then in Italy, and finally came to France in 1592. This Order supplied many missionaries for India and chaplains for the French army. The above-mentioned convent was conducted by Franciscan nuns and situated close to the rue du Bac.

“ Paris. *July 13th, 1788.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAR FRIEND,

“ Verily it is a century since I last wrote to you or received news from you ; but I am sure that you will do me the justice to believe that the affection you inspired in my heart in my earliest years will never change. I followed you in imagination from Paris to Cork, from Cork to Kerry, and from Kerry back to Cork ; if, however, you did not receive a line from me in any of those places, it was because I knew that your leisure moments were few, and I thought it my duty to respect them. . . . Although I was very glad to hear that you had been sent to Cork, to be among those you love best on earth, I could not help regretting the scandal caused by your nomination. It is a horrible scandal, indeed, and so incredible in every way that I could not believe it for several days. Luckily it has aroused but little interest in Paris ; may the Almighty cast a look of pity upon that unhappy man and grant him the grace of an exemplary conversion ! I do not doubt that you will find his diocese in a very deplorable condition, but I hope that you will manage to restore order. I shall not fail to ask Heaven in my prayers to remember the pastor and the long-neglected flock.

“ I thank you very much for your questions concerning my present position. It is precisely the same as when you left Paris. I live in the same room in the same house ; I come home at the same hours ; in short, I know nobody whose life has changed less than mine has done until now. It is not that I have had no opportunity to change my mode of life ; several propositions have been made to me, and one of them was really worthy of consideration ; but long ago I made a rule not to take any important step in life without first asking advice. So whenever an attempt was made to tempt me from my solitude, I consulted some wise and virtuous friends whose advice I knew would not be influenced by any other consideration than that of my good and the glory of God ; hitherto they have recommended me to stay where I am. On one or two occasions, however, they all agreed that I ought to accept ; where-

upon I took steps towards settling matters, but Providence always came to my aid and destroyed those plans without any interference on my part. I have therefore every reason to believe that the Almighty wishes me to live and die in my humble but happy retreat ; and in fact when I examine myself with impartiality, I see that my present position is best suited to *my feeble constitution* and to my still more feeble talents. I say *my feeble constitution*, because I am in poor health and because I was threatened with a serious illness last year. Rest and dissipation have nearly restored me to my former good health ; but it is certain that I shall never be able to do very much either with my body or with my soul. However, I do not mean that I am quite lazy ; and although my labours are confined to the little circle of English and Irish who live in Paris, I think I do everything that can be reasonably expected of me—at least my friends say so. May the Almighty judge me as leniently as they judge me ! But I perceive that I am talking too much about myself, for my paper is nearly covered. My poor mother enjoys fairly good health for her age. I cannot tell you how happy I make her when I give her news of you and of all yours. My sister has not written to Miss Moylan for an age ; she is waiting for an opportunity to do so. I have told you nothing about public matters : everything seems quiet, but the battle has begun and no human being can tell what will be the issue.

“ I remain, with much affection and respect, Monseigneur, your very obedient and very humble servant,

“ H. EDGEWORTH.”

The above letter, with its quaint allusion to rest and dissipation—it would be interesting to know what dissipation meant to this simple-minded pastor of souls—is the first letter reproduced in the “ Correspondance de l'Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont,” published in Paris in 1824.

THE DAWN OF THE REVOLUTION 13

The Abbé, besides possessing a wonderfully sweet and gentle disposition, had a large amount of tact and that rare and most precious virtue, religious tolerance. In 1788 one of his Irish relatives, a Protestant lady, came to Paris, when the Abbé did everything which lay in his power to make her visit enjoyable ; one subject, however—and this little trait shows him in a very favourable light—the subject of religion was, by mutual consent, never mentioned by either. Yet had he wished, he might, perhaps, have made a convert, as he did about this time in the case of a young American in the suite of La Fayette, who was so struck by one of the Abbé's sermons that on his return to his native land he became a Catholic and devoted the rest of his life to good works.

The taking of the Bastille, July 14th, 1789, was the signal for many terrible events ; it heralded the emigration which included many of the Abbé Edgeworth's brethren in religion, for the clergy and nobility, terrified by what they saw was inevitable, began to flee before the coming storm. To add to the many trials of the poor, the harvest of 1788 had been particularly bad. In August, those landowners who possessed any grain were forced to give it up in order to feed the unhappy peasants who were to be seen dying on the high roads of France. The taking of the Bastille was likewise the signal for the beginning of the scenes of horror which were to continue until the end of the Reign of Terror. Many of the nobles who had preferred to remain on their estates rather than emigrate, were strangled, burnt, stoned to death, drowned, beheaded, cut to pieces while still alive. M. Ernest Daudet affirms that a certain M. Guillin, during the

autumn of 1789, was killed, roasted, and *eaten* in the presence of his wife.

The Abbé speaks in his letters, written during this year, of his numerous brethren in religion who are daily leaving the country ; he, for his part, declares that he intends to brave the storm.

One of the first of the clergy to emigrate—although he, of all persons, had least cause to do so—was the Archbishop of Paris.* Already in 1774 he had become famous for his charity when, as Bishop of Châlons, he won the love and esteem of his flock. Louis XVI. showed great perspicacity when he chose M. de Juigné to be Archbishop of Paris on the death of M. de Beaumont, that noble member of the church of France who was made Archbishop of Paris against his will, whose charity was inexhaustible, and who till his last moment struggled against the luxury and the scandals for which the court was so notorious. The winter of 1788-1789, following the bad summer of 1788, had increased the sufferings of the poor to a terrible extent : M. de Juigné did not hesitate to sell his plate and everything valuable of which he had the right to dispose. In his generosity he spent more money than he possessed ; at the end of the winter he found himself in debt for 400,000 *livres*, for which his eldest brother, the Marquis de Juigné, went surety. As deputy for the clergy at the *Etats Généraux*, he fought for his faith and refused to vote for any of the reforms which were slowly but surely creeping into the legislature. For this

* Antoine Eléonore Léon Leclerc de Juigné (1728-1811). He first came into public notice when he was appointed grand-vicar to his relative, M. de Bezons, Bishop of Carcassonne, and then again when he was made agent for the clergy in 1760, which appointment he held for five years.

conduct the populace, forgetful of his charity, of his devotion to the cause of humanity, greeted him when he was leaving the *Assemblée* at Versailles with a shower of mud and stones.*

Another clerical *émigré* was the celebrated *père* Elysée.† On emigrating, he assumed the management of the ambulance corps of the Prince de Condé's army, which post he held until that army was disbanded, when he was appointed physician to Louis XVIII., who placed great confidence in his talents, and took him to England, where he earned fame for himself, and afterwards, in 1814, to Paris. The *père* Elysée was the only person who could alleviate the awful sufferings to which Louis XVIII. was such a martyr towards the end of his life. He used as remedies certain herbs known only to himself. After his death in 1817, Louis' physicians, being ignorant of the names of these herbs, were unable to continue the *père* Elysée's treatment, by which alone the king's life could have been prolonged.

The Abbé Edgeworth received more than one invitation to return to his native land. Miss Ussher, his mother's sister, wrote offering him a shelter ; to this kind invitation he replied as follows :

“ Paris. *July*, 1789.

“ MY DEAR AUNT,

“ It would have been a great consolation to me if I could have paid you a visit at Eastwell, and if I could have become your chaplain there or elsewhere. But

* After spending many years in exile, he returned to Paris, where he died in 1811, aged eighty-three.

† Marie Vincent Talochon (1753-1817). This clever man joined the confraternity of the *Frères de la Charité* in 1774 and became a distinguished surgeon.

alas ! I am lost to Ireland, and Ireland is lost to me. Thirty years spent in France have broken all the ties which bound me to my native land, and I should feel quite as lost there as if I were in Spain or Italy. There was some talk a few years ago of placing me at the head of the diocese in which I was born : I thank Heaven that this project came to nought. I cannot think how any sensible person could have conceived such a plan. I feel that I am quite unsuited to occupy a post in Ireland. I know that some of your prelates, misled by certain erroneous reports, or by exaggerated feelings of friendship for me, have more than once expressed a wish to see me in their midst ; but they forget that I am now forty-four years of age, and that when trees have attained their full growth they wither and die if transplanted to a new soil.

“ So you see that I am destined by Providence to live and die in France ; and what does it matter, after all, provided that my end be that of a *good man* ? It would, in truth, be a very sweet consolation to me to make your acquaintance here below, but I hope that we shall meet some day in a better world ; and, although I shall no longer be your servant and your nephew, I shall be your fellow-citizen and your friend,

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

The story of the Emigration is a painful but a very interesting one. Comprising the unfortunate king's own brother, aunts, and cousins * (who had been some of the first to flee), this horde of fugitives contained every form of human foible.

The causes of the Revolution, of which the emigration was the prelude, the chain of events which led to that wonderful upheaval with its far-reaching effects in other lands, dated from the reign of Louis XIV.

* The Duc d'Orléans had left France, October 14th, 1789, under the pretext of a confidential mission from Louis XVI. to persons unknown.

The craze for "the simple life" started by Rousseau and Voltaire had been an attempt to check the luxury and the extravagance which was to lead so many men and women, guilty and innocent, to the guillotine; but as a craze it was fated to prove a failure. Madame Victoire, aunt to Louis XVI., headed the band of nature-worshippers. In a letter to one of her friends, she says:

"I spent the night in the garden; I went to bed after having breakfasted upon some excellent onion soup and a cup of coffee and cream. I really enjoyed looking at the beautiful moon, the dawn and the glorious sun, and then watching my cows, sheep and fowls, and the labourers going to their work."

Madame Victoire doubtless thought this vigil a very meritorious performance, and imagined that she had been living the life of the people—for a few hours, at least. But she forgot that the labourer is obliged to go to bed early if he is to be up early in the morning; and, what is more, in order to make that "excellent onion soup" one requires plenty of butter; coffee and cream were as unfamiliar to the labourer of those days as black bread and cabbage soup were to Madame Victoire.

Aristocratic mothers, in obedience to Voltaire's behests, nursed their infants for the space of three years, and, so far from being ashamed, were proud to be seen doing so in such public places as the theatre and the church. One memorialist of the eighteenth century tells us of a strong-minded lady who would not allow her little boy to wear any clothes until he had attained the age of six years; on being ushered into her boudoir, visitors found, to their astonishment, the urchin sprawling on the hearth-

rug as naked as when he came into the world. And these eccentricities even penetrated through the narrow *grilles* of the convents and monasteries ; young girls would go out and search the highways and hedges for beggars whom they would bring back to their refectory and there wash their feet.

Religion was becoming a farce. Many members of the aristocracy only went to church because it was the proper thing to do. It is not surprising that the priests were forbidden to appear at the court of Versailles clad in their sombre black cassocks : they, too, must endeavour to give themselves the necessary *opéra-comique* aspect beloved of the young wife of Louis XVI. ; they must only appear *en petit collet*. One lady goes to church on Sunday when staying at her country-seat because, if she did not do so, all the people on her estate would be scandalised. Although religion was considered necessary for the uneducated, the peasantry too were beginning to be attacked by the new ideas. One writer says :

“ The saints are no longer said to bring fair weather and gentle rains ; their day is over, and I pity them if, after having given themselves so much trouble on earth, they are not treated with more consideration in another world.”

Another lady attended mass because she did not wish to shock her lackeys—but the said lackeys knew why she went to church, and despised her for her hypocrisy.

Confession is said to be “ very salutary to the soul.” Those who continued to attend to their religious duties had to face much ridicule at the hands of their relations

and friends. The daughters of the unhappy Duchesse d'Ayen, who had lately chosen the Abbé Edgeworth to be her father-confessor, and who was so soon to perish with one of them on the scaffold, had been brought up very strictly, to the disgust of their aunt, Mme. de Tessé, who pretended to go into fits of admiration at their pious ways and talk.

The clergy had much to answer for in this sad state of affairs. The faithful could hardly be expected to obey or revere a bishop who drove about with his mistress, a well-known dancer at the opera, in his carriage bearing his arms. Another bishop, who shared the Bourbons' mania for hunting, showed so little respect for his sacred calling that he frequently said mass without troubling to change his scarlet hunting-coat and his breeches. The Abbess of Fontévrault treated the priests placed under her authority with scant respect ; they were subjected to insolent treatment from scullions and kitchen-wenches and were not allowed to begin to say mass until informed by one of the tyrant's serving-maids that her mistress was " ready to attend to them."

Louis XVI. at times regarded the Emigration with favour and at times with disfavour. The *émigrés*, who were eventually to number 200,000 persons and whose names were to fill nine huge volumes, rallied round the Prince de Condé, the descendant of the Grand Condé, at Worms ; bent upon rescuing their king they ignored his prayers and commands not to anger the French nation by imprudent behaviour, and only hastened, by their disobedience, the catastrophe which they were anxious to avert. The receptions accorded to the *émigrés* were as diverse as

the characters of the said *émigrés* who came knocking at the doors of the European principalities.

In Germany the *émigrés* had much to suffer ;* their chief oppressors in Berlin were, strange to say, descendants of Protestant refugees expelled from France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The German peasants looked upon the *émigrés* as legitimate prey, and seized all their baggage, destroying what they could not carry away. The gates of Cologne bore a warning to the effect that " Jews, beggars, and *émigrés* were forbidden to enter the town."

Condé wrote :

" The peasants worry us in every possible way ; we can no longer find shelter except with our swords and pistols in our hands. The nobility are obliged to defend themselves against such weapons as pitchforks, hoes, and pickaxes."

In Holland the *émigrés* received most generous treatment. A poor boy named Grandry was sheltered by a French pastor living in Maestricht ; when somebody remarked to the good man that his own eleven children were already almost more than he could support on his meagre fortune, this " saint," as M. Ernest Daudet rightly calls him, replied :

" He shall be the twelfth ! "

Switzerland did not belie her reputation for hospitality. Mme. de Tessé, who had been able to take a considerable part of her fortune into exile, sheltered in her Swiss home as many priests as she could find room for, and this she did while protesting that she hated the clergy, and express-

* See Goethe's beautiful poem, " Hermann und Dorothea."

ing her conviction that they deserved all their tribulations. Another wealthy *émigrette*, Mme. de Souris, took charge of five hundred priests, while other persons living in the same town, less wealthy, but not a whit less charitable, sent their daughters to wait upon the fugitives.

Some of the Swiss, however, were inclined to look with disfavour upon the refugees. A peasant who had given shelter to a French priest was ordered to turn him out of his cottage, to which he replied by bringing an action against his neighbour who owned a big dog whose appetite, said the crafty peasant, was a public danger and would make the price of bread go up. When the magistrate chided him for trying to deprive his neighbour of the right to keep his four-footed friend, the yokel retorted :

“ There ! I’ve got you now. You let my neighbour keep a dog and yet you dare to wish to expel a French priest who is my friend.”

Two little boys who had been abandoned by their parents managed to escape to Friburg ; they were immediately seized by order of the *Commission des émigrés* * and told to leave the canton. The *curé* of Friburg, the Abbé Seydoux, having heard of their arrival, offered to go bail for the boys, hoping that, by so doing, the municipal authorities would consent to keep them. However, as nobody would have anything to do with

* There was a perfect system of espionage directed against the French *émigrés* in Switzerland, with its head-centre at Geneva under the management of the ex-vicar-general of the diocese of Châlons, of the name of Soulavie, who had married his cook. He was the author of several licentious works. In 1793 he was appointed as representative of the Republic at Geneva, but in the following year he was thrown into prison for having espoused Robespierre’s cause too ardently. He escaped capital punishment, however, and retired into private life after the 18th *Brumaire*. He died in the odour of sanctity, having made an *amende honorable* to the Church.

them, he himself determined to act the part of a good Samaritan ; he took them home with him, and not only clothed and fed them, but educated them for the space of two years.

At Constance the Comtesse de Pont filled her *château* with priests whom she taught to embroider, giving them in return for their work board and lodging ; her great-nieces, the demoiselles de Montboissier, and her waiting-women instructed and waited upon the priests, but there was not room for all. In this same town two hundred priests, obliged to beg their bread from door to door, eventually obtained from the Bishops of Langres, Nîmes, Saint-Malo, and Comminges a loan of 15,000 *livres*, which they promised to repay eighteen months after regaining possession of their own property.

Spain provided homes for three thousand priests in the towns of Toledo, Orense, Valencia, Siguenza, and elsewhere. Pope Pius VI. welcomed two thousand and gave them shelter in different Italian monasteries.

But it was in England that the *émigrés* received the warmest welcome. Their children found shelter at Penn's College, admission to which was obtained through the influence of such men as the Bishop of Montpellier, the Comtes de Botherel and de Bizien, and the Baron de Blaisel. The clergy, in particular, had no cause to complain of the treatment awarded to them. Rich and poor, learned and ignorant, came forward with offers of help. The Marchioness of Buckingham gave employment to two hundred priests at a tapestry manufactory. Lord Bridgewater had an eye for the picturesque when he offered to lodge several monks on condition that they

would continue to wear their brown or white robes so that he might have the pleasure of seeing them walk up and down the green lawns of his country-seat reading their breviaries or reciting their prayers. A little colony of priests who were clever with their fingers settled in Somerstown, where they earned their living by making artificial flowers. The freemasons of England* also protected them. The King's House at Winchester received a certain number of priests ; one of these, Father Couvet by name, having been so imprudent as to convert two Protestant clergymen, was expelled. The University of Oxford went so far as to print a Catholic Bible in French for the use of the French priests. A sermon preached by that true Christian, Bishop Horsley, was probably responsible for much of the kind treatment awarded to the fugitives ; in this sermon the good man said : " None at this season (Christmas) are more entitled to our offices of love than those with whom the difference is wide in doctrine, discipline, and external rites, than those venerable exiles endeared to us by the edifying example they exhibit of patient suffering for conscience' sake. . . ."

His appeal was heard and answered. Thanks to Mme. d'Arblay and her committee of ladies, England subscribed the sum of £80,000 towards the support of the French clergy.

M. Forneron tells of how the women of a London fish-market, when a poor French priest came to buy some cheap fish for his brethren, filled his basket with their best and only consented to take a few pence from him, lest he should think that he was an object of charity.

* *A propos* of this association, it was said that the French Revolution was the work of freemasons !

It sometimes happened that parents emigrated and left their children behind them in France. M. and Mme. de Damas, for instance, emigrated, leaving their offspring to the tender mercies of the revolutionists. Of Mme. de Damas* it may be said that she was more wife than mother, for she fought by her husband's side, attired as a man and under the name of Boussay, in the army of the *émigrés*. When her husband was killed at the battle of Louvain (1792) this remarkable woman dug his grave with her bayonet, buried him, and went back to fight. She took part in the Quiberon expedition (June, 1795), when she was captured by the *bleus* and was condemned to be shot; she would have been executed had not Mme. de Portail, one of her former friends, recognised her and, by giving her a disguise, enabled her to escape from prison. The fate of children voluntarily abandoned in France was very varied. While the two little Bourbon-Bussets were put in chains by the representative of the Republic, Forestier, and were led about from village to village like performing bears, other children were sheltered and most kindly treated by their parents' former serving-maids and lackeys.

A touching description of a meeting between husband and wife is given by the Marquis Costa de Beauregard in his work: "Un homme d'autrefois." "It frequently happened that trials shared in common tightened the bonds of affection. The husband usually served in a regiment formed of *émigrés* while the wife waited long years in anxiety and solitude; then when they met again,

* During the Restoration, Louis XVIII. made Mme. de Damas *chevalier* of the Order of Saint Louis.

after enduring the pangs of separation, gazed into each other's eyes, tried to remember the past, the wife no longer recognised her husband in the wrinkled, sun-burnt, tear-seamed face of the man before her, while she herself was withered, bent, and quite unrecognisable with her white hair. Their children were dead. No trace was left of their lost youth. The future held no hope for them. . . ."

CHAPTER II

Some priests who refused to emigrate : Characters of Louis XVI. and the Comte de Provence : The king sends his chaplains abroad : The *émigrés* began to return : *Almanach du Père Gérard* : Opinions for and against the Civil Constitution of the clergy : The king at last consents to sign the Constitution.

ALTHOUGH many of the clergy had emigrated with the nobility, always their most powerful supporters, several remained in France and did noble service in the cause of humanity, for which death was only too often the reward. Only two bishops, however, continued to ordain candidates for Holy Orders during the Reign of Terror ; these two heroes, Maillé de la Tour-Landry, Bishop of Saint-Papoul, and Bausset, Bishop of Alais, had to wear strange disguises and hide in very humble dwellings to escape the guillotine. A washer-woman sheltered the Bishop of Saint-Papoul who instructed the would-be priests, at that time occupying such positions as those of clerks and school-teachers, in a butcher's shop. The Bishop of Alais, who had been elected *député des notables* in 1787, and whose see was suppressed three years later by the *Assemblée constituante*, was less lucky, for he did not escape prison.*

Another ecclesiastic, the Abbé Emery, superior of Saint-

* M. Bausset was released after the 9th *Thermidor*. Both Napoleon and Louis XVIII. had a very high opinion of his talents. Louis XVIII. gave him many proofs of his esteem. He received the cardinal's hat during the Restoration.

Sulpice in Paris, for his efforts to reconcile his brethren to the new order of things, was also thrown into prison, where he was forgotten—purposely perhaps.*

Another priest, Marie Nicolas Sylvestre Guillon (1760-1847), the future bishop *in partibus* of Morocco, refused to emigrate. He was the author of a learned work upon Oriental literature, published with signal success in 1788, which won the applause of the celebrated linguist and traveller Barthélémy. By him he was introduced to the Princesse de Lamballe, whose chaplain and librarian he became. In consequence of his opposition to the civil constitution of the clergy, he was forced to hide during the Terror; he managed to make a living for himself by following the profession of doctor at Meaux.†

Dom Gerle (1740-1805), a Carthusian monk, who in 1789 was Prior of the monastery of Port Sainte-Marie, was another priest who did not emigrate—for the very good reason that he was one of the leaders of the Revolu-

* The Abbé Emery, while in prison, was allowed to administer the Last Sacraments to many of the guillotine's victims, heard Mme. Elisabeth confess on one occasion, and blessed Marie-Antoinette as she knelt behind the bars of her prison. He was liberated after the 9th *Thermidor*, and on the re-establishment of the Church in France was made grand vicar of the seminary of Saint-Sulpice, Paris.

† He reappeared in 1801, when he published some remarks concerning the *Concordat* which was concluded between Napoleon and Pius VII., in order to put an end to the anarchy which had reigned among the clergy of France since the civil constitution had been instituted. This compact restored to the Pope much of his power and authority; the bishops were, however, to be chosen by the head of the state. The Abbé Guillon was thrown into prison, where he remained only four months. He was afterwards made Canon of Paris and Librarian to the archbishopric. He accompanied Cardinal Fesch to Rome, but returned to Paris in 1810, in order to occupy the post of Professor of *eloquence sacrée* at the *Faculté de Théologie*, which he held thirty years. Louis Philippe appointed him Bishop of Beauvais, but he could not obtain a bull from the Pope on account of his having administered the Last Sacraments to the celebrated Abbé Grégoire. Having confessed his fault, he was nominated Bishop *in partibus* of Morocco in 1832.

tion. Elected deputy at the *Etats Généraux* by the clergy of Riom, he, nevertheless, espoused the new cause with the greatest enthusiasm. His religious convictions, however, made him loudly declare on April 12th, 1790, that the Catholic religion ought to be proclaimed the national religion. It is probable that the events of the Revolution were too much for his brain, for he later professed firm belief in Catherine Théot, who pretended to be the mother of God in order to earn fame and fortune for herself; indeed, so loud was he in his admiration of this imposter that in 1794 he found himself in prison, where he remained until another of his idols, Robespierre, had bidden farewell to the scene of action.

One of the Abbé Edgeworth's compatriots, Father Robert M'Carthy, a native of Cork, also refused to emigrate, but remained throughout the Revolution at Toulouse, which town, notwithstanding the efforts of the constitutional clergy to persuade the populace to expel their fellow-priests who had not taken the oath of obedience to the new constitution, remained comparatively quiet. It is true that some of the clergy were thrown into prison, many insulted in the street, that the monasteries were emptied of their occupants, that the bells were taken out of the church-towers, that the clergy were compelled to wear the tricolour cockade on hat, coat, and sash; but these vexations, as Father M'Carthy himself says in his memoirs, only helped to revive the zeal of some of his flock, who during the last few years had become indifferent to religious matters.

The weak point in the character of Louis XVI. was his indolence, his inability to keep his mind fixed on

one subject : one day he would express a desire to see his subjects return to France, on the morrow he would declare that his only hope for salvation lay in the help which he expected from the *émigrés*.

Monsieur, the king's brother, who was known at that time as the Comte de Provence, had always been jealous of the king, and on one occasion had even fought with him. They had only been separated by Marie-Antoinette herself, who by this interference had earned his undying hatred, a hatred which manifested itself when he dared to hint that her eldest daughter, later to be known as the *French Antigone*, was not the child of Louis XVI., as others later tried to prove that the martyred Louis XVII. was the son of Fersen. At this juncture *Monsieur* declared that "he would not leave France until the king, his brother, had given him formal permission to do so." The real cause, however, was not his loyalty to his brother, but was far different.

Exile meant privations and discomforts, and the future king, Louis XVIII., did not look forward with pleasure to privations in any form whatsoever. Like his brother, Louis XVI., and even his sister, Madame Elisabeth, he had an unruly appetite for the good things of this world. To cite only one instance of the corruption existing during the reign of Louis XVI., the latter's brothers received, exclusive of their allowances as princes of the royal blood, little presents to the value of 28,000,000 *francs*.

Louis XVI. was the victim of circumstances and of his predecessor's evil deeds. Nature had denied him the qualities which might have saved France from many scenes of bloodshed and cruelty. He suffered all his life

from the severe treatment accorded him in his childhood, a childhood entirely devoid of affection. "Nobody loves me!" cried he on one occasion, as he flung himself, sobbing with grief, into the arms of his aunt, Madame Adélaïde, who, with her sister Madame Victoire, was to die in exile in Trieste. Poor little child! Even Marie-Antoinette, during the first years of their married life, did not understand *le pauvre homme*, as she called him. A letter of remonstrance written to her by her brother, Joseph II., Emperor of Germany, shows us how she neglected her duties as a wife.

"Deign to think for a moment of the disagreeable episodes witnessed by you at the ball at the Opera-house and, what is more, of the adventures which you yourself related to us. What is the reason of all these adventures, these vulgar encounters? Why do you go and mix with those libertines, those disreputable women, and listen to, and perhaps take part in, their coarse talk? The king abandoned at Versailles one whole night, and you mixing in the society of all the *canaille* of Paris!"

It was at one of these balls at the Opera-house that the Comte d'Artois, Marie-Antoinette's favourite brother-in-law, whom Marie-Thérèse, in her wisdom, called her daughter's most dangerous friend, insulted the Duchesse de Bourbon, his cousin's wife, and had in consequence to fight a duel, of which all Paris heard and talked.

The Comte d'Artois had been one of the first to leave France. Louis XVI. saw him go without much reluctance; but it was with a heavy heart that he gave permission, in fact, almost ordered the Prince de Lambesc,

his wife's relative, and the young Duc de Duras, his first gentleman of the Bedchamber, to leave France. The first of these nobles, Charles Eugène de Lorraine, Duc d'Elbeuf, Prince de Lambesc, was a colonel in the Royal Allemand regiment. Having charged the populace outside the Tuileries on July 12th, 1789, and been tried and acquitted by the Châtelet, he was anxious to leave the scene of his futile attempt to crush out the fires of the Revolution. Perhaps the cruellest parting of all was when Louis XVI., terrified for the safety of his chaplains, the Cardinal de Montmorency, M. de Roquelaure, Bishop of Meaux, and M. de Sabran, Bishop of Laon, sent these gentlemen to join the other *émigrés*.

The Abbé Edgeworth, as a member of the Catholic Faith, regarded the new laws which were being formed concerning religious communities in France with an unfavourable eye; and yet these laws were founded upon strictly Christian principles. The Protestants and Jews, who had been hitherto cruelly persecuted, were no longer to be pariahs; they were no more to be hunted from town to town like wild animals, until "hungry and thirsty their souls fainted in them." Persecution and oppression were, at a not very distant date, to give place to a wider conception of religion.

But the good Abbé was not the only person who frowned upon hearing of the new laws which were so soon to come into force: Mme. Elisabeth de France, the king's sister, whose confessor the Abbé was soon to become, told her childhood's friend, Angélique de Mackau, now Mme. de Bombelles, in a letter dated January 29th, 1790, that the

Jews, on the preceding day, had been granted the right to live where they chose. The world must indeed be coming to an end !

"Yesterday," say she, "the *Assemblée* put the finishing touch to its folly and irreligion by according to the Jews the right to exercise whatever professions they prefer. A very lengthy discussion took place ; but, as usual, common sense was worsted. The Jews will not be the only people who will enjoy these privileges ; you will soon see that the whole nation will want the same. It has been reserved to our century to welcome as a friend the only nation which God had marked with a sign of reprobation, to forget the death which it inflicted upon Our Saviour and the blessings which that Saviour has ever showered upon France, to allow His enemies to conquer, and to open its arms to those enemies. I cannot tell you how angry this decree has made me. However, we must submit and await with resignation the punishment which Heaven reserves for us, for God will not allow this sin to go unpunished. Our present state proves beyond a doubt that God avenges Himself ; and that, although He is long suffering, when once the ingratitude of mankind has aroused His Ire, He punishes the sinner as he deserves to be punished."

In a letter written by the same royal personage two months later, we find mention of the fact that some of the *émigrés*—the Princesse de Lamballe was one of their number—had actually returned to the French capital.

" . . . I am quite astonished to think that anybody can want to return to France. I am sure that if I once found myself the other side of the frontier, I should not return in a hurry. However, it would be a pity if everybody felt as I feel, for our poor country would then be in a pitiable condition."

The famous *Almanach du Père Gérard*,* the work of the still more famous revolutionist, Collot d'Herbois,† took a very different view of the new laws concerning the Protestants and Jews in France. In his sixth discourse upon religion, *père Gérard*, who is supposed to be holding a meeting in his garden, exhorts all wives and mothers to be reassured and not to pay any attention to the absurd threat of Hell with which the *curés* try to frighten and rule them. To the Protestant members of his audience *père Gérard* says: "We are waiting for you to tighten the bonds of fraternity with a holy kiss. Come, *monsieur le curé*, set the example and embrace your brother the minister!"

Whereupon a general embracing takes place; Catholics and Protestants kiss one another and swear to live in peace in future. The Protestant clergyman then introduces his wife and children to his brother in Christ with this naïve speech:

* At the recommendation of Ducis, this work received a prize from the *Société des Amis de la Constitution*, and was printed and distributed in all the different towns of France. *Père Gérard* was a real person. Born in Brittany, where he lived the life of a farm-labourer, this excellent old man had won the love and esteem of his compatriots, and had been chosen to represent them at the *Etats Généraux*, where he quickly distinguished himself by his shrewdness and common-sense. He became quite a famous person all over France. More fortunate than many of his fellow-deputies, after the *Etats Généraux* were dissolved he returned to his humble home in Brittany, and died in peace and honour.

† Collot d'Herbois, Jean-Marie (1750-1796), began his career as an actor in the provinces. With the dawn of the Revolution he came to Paris, where he wrote some plays and published his *Almanach du Père Gérard*, which won for him an entrance and a hearing in the principal revolutionary clubs. He was one of the instigators of the events of August 10th, 1792. After becoming a member of the *Paris Commune*, a deputy to the *Convention*, and a member of the *Comité de salut public* he was sent to Lyons, where he made himself detested for his cruelty. On returning to the capital, he was one of the first to denounce Robespierre on the 9th *Thermidor*. This act of treachery did not save him from deportation in the following year to Guiana, where he must have met many of his friends, the priests. He died in 1796.

"Behold my wife! behold my children! What a happy man am I! and to think that such happiness is denied to you!"

Père Gérard having informed his audience that all Frenchmen, no matter their position, religion or colour, will in future be eligible to occupy any post, an old peasant exclaims :

"What! even negroes?"

"Yes, even negroes. The land of France only exists for free men. Besides, negroes are often very good and very honest men. Is virtue confined to the white race? Do not negroes possess kindness, courage, patience, and humanity as much as their white brethren? All good and virtuous men are brothers."

On January 12th, 1790, a decree enacted by the *Assemblée nationale* placed religion in France on an entirely different basis. Instead of leaving everything connected with the Church in the hands of the clergy, the people were now authorised to participate in such important matters as choosing their own bishops and *curés*; all bishops, ministers, and rabbis were to be paid by the state, and the sum of 77,000,000 *francs* was to be put aside every year in order to pay the clergy and also indemnify them for various benefices and revenues which they had enjoyed hitherto; for the clergy, like the nobility, were now called upon to renounce many of their privileges. On February 4th of this same year the king, accompanied by his ministers, paid an unexpected but welcome visit to the *Assemblée*, when he declared himself a friend of the constitution, promised to maintain the people's newly-won liberties and to bring up his son to walk in his footsteps. That same evening the mayor of



Maxillier, del.

Duhamel, sculpt.

J. SYLVAIN BAILLY, FIRST PRESIDENT OF
THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY AND FIRST
MAYOR OF PARIS



Paris, Bailly,* together with the *Assemblée nationale* and the *Commune*, went to Notre Dame, where a *Te Deum* was sung and the mayor received various deputations, including a group of foundlings whose fate was considerably ameliorated by the new constitution, to which belongs not only the honour of having given to God's chosen people the right to live the lives of men—not of hunted creatures—but also the glory of having provided shelter for the vanquished in the battle of life, and for the innocent victims of the faults of others.

The king, however, did not assist at the *Te Deum*. At the conclusion of the ceremony Bailly, standing on the Place de Grève, read aloud the formula of the oath which the vote of the previous December had ordered the nation to take, in which the people swore to be faithful to the nation, to the king, and to the laws of the country ; this done, the crowd replied with one voice : “ *Je jure.*”

In the following letter, the Abbé Edgeworth tells his friend, Dr. Moylan, that he expects his brethren in religion will soon be deprived of other privileges.

“ Paris. *February 18th, 1790.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAREST FRIEND,

“ I can only spend a few moments with you, for the post is about to start ; but knowing your solicitude for the Church of France and unwilling to lose time, I hasten to inform you of the decree which was passed last Saturday after a discussion which lasted nine hours. All the monastic establishments in the kingdom have been suppressed ; and one of the articles of our new constitu-

* Bailly, Jean Sylvain, member of the *Académie française* : when the Revolution broke out he was chosen as president of the *Assemblée constituante* and later became mayor of Paris. He perished on the scaffold, November 12th, 1793.

tion decrees that no perpetual vows are to be taken in France. The monks and nuns are permitted to leave their monasteries and nunneries and to live wherever they think fit ; they will receive pensions, but the amount is not yet fixed. Those monks who wish to remain will be obliged to live in certain establishments which will be set aside for their use. The nuns can remain in their respective convents and will be allowed to live and die in peace.

"It is not for me to remark upon this decree ; but many think it will lead to other rules concerning the vows by which we priests are bound to celibacy. In that case I leave you to imagine what scandals will arise. However, I do not think that they wish to liberate those who have already taken those vows ; but I should not be surprised if a decree were not passed forbidding such vows to be taken by any candidate for the the subdeaconship.

"I will do my best to obtain the objects which you desire, whenever the sale of Church ornaments commences, which will be soon. But I should like to know, first of all, whether you wish for gold or silver plated candlesticks : the former, I think, would look better on the altar. . ."

To understand the last sentence of the Abbé's letter, it should be remembered that a decree had lately been passed ordering all property belonging to the Church to be seized and sold, upon hearing which, Dr. Moylan wrote to the Abbé, begging him to purchase various church ornaments of which he was in need.

That the priesthood was likely to be freed from vows of celibacy vexed and pained the good Abbé more than any of the other reforms ; yet those vows of celibacy had been the stumbling-block of the Catholic Church for many centuries and are still the cause of much sorrow and scandal, notwithstanding the fact that the ideal priest,

the friend, the comforter of the poor and afflicted, is to be found all over France.

The Abbé's next letter shows into what a state of confusion ecclesiastical and financial matters were beginning to fall :

“ May 6th, 1790.

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAR FRIEND,

“ I have put off from week to week replying to your letter of March 4th, with which you favoured me, because I hoped that our *Assemblée* would come to a decision concerning the affairs of the Church ; but it seems to me that its line of conduct is still what it was at the beginning : that is to say, to strike only one blow at a time lest the reasonable portion of the nation should rise in revolt on learning what was in store for us. You have probably heard of the two decrees concerning Church property : by the first it was declared to be the property of the nation ; and by the second, which was passed about a fortnight ago, it was placed under the supervision of the civil government ; in consequence the clergy have been despoiled. In order to obtain a more exact estimate of church property, it has been decided that the *curés'* stipends (the amount of which has still to be fixed) shall be paid to them, not by the persons who have hitherto had the management of such affairs, but by the national treasurer. It was thought that the *Assemblée nationale*, having thus despoiled the clergy, would have immediately decided what stipend they were to receive ; but nothing has been done in the matter. However, these temporal affairs furnish some members with an opportunity to insist that the Roman Catholic religion be solemnly declared the religion of the nation. The subject was discussed with the greatest fervour, and the Revolutionary party managed to elude the question. However, 305 members of the nobility, the clergy, and the *Tiers Etat* have since held a meeting, and have published

a kind of manifesto expressing their feelings upon the matter.

“What will be the outcome of all this? God knows; but it seems as if general confusion were bound to ensue. Toulouse, Montauban, and a few other towns in the southern provinces have already expressed their fears concerning the laws governing Church property. But what good can the opposition of a few towns in a country like France do? According to what I hear on all sides, the desperate party is master nearly everywhere. Time, I imagine, will open the eyes of the people and will show them the precipice down which they are being cast; for, religion aside, France is in an inexpressibly grievous condition. Without a king, without money, without credit, and with business at a standstill, what will become of her? However, Paris, notwithstanding all this confusion, is fairly quiet; 30,000 armed men, by command of the *Assemblée*, keep order, or at least make its inhabitants behave. The monks are still in their monasteries, and so far no sales have taken place; in fact, I do not think that people want them to do so for some time yet. If I should be mistaken, I will take care to remember your commission.

“All your friends are well and join with me in sending compliments to you and yours.

“I remain ever yours sincerely,

“HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

The year 1790 was closing, a fateful year which had seen the end of the *Assemblée nationale* and which (as M. Ernest Hamel says) “had in the space of three years done away with fourteen centuries of abuses.” The hopes of the nation were centred in the constitution which the king, with lamentable obstinacy, had hitherto refused to sign. But the events of the last few months had done much to weaken this resolution. The Abbé probably approved of his conduct, to judge by the tone in which the following letter to Dr. Moylan is couched:

“ Paris. *November 6th, 1790.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAR FRIEND,

“ I was much surprised to find that I had not yet replied to your letter of July 15th. It is true that the blame does not lie entirely with me, for I have never been so overwhelmed with business of one sort and another as I am at the present time ; and as each day goes by, I am obliged to go more and more into the world. The revolution is progressing very quietly—will it always do so ? I, for my part, do not think so. It seems to me as if our shapeless and incoherent constitution bore in itself the cause of its destruction : time alone will show us. But when that day comes, what scenes of horror we shall witness before the deceived multitude can be brought back to a sense of justice ! Meanwhile all classes complain, but in silence ; for fear is the cruellest of all our burdens. The people, in the hope of seeing better times, bear their present trials with patience. The innumerable pamphlets which are distributed every morning keep alive the hope that things will be better some day ; but, in the mean time, prosperity seems to go farther and farther away from us ; the public credit is still supported, but this state of affairs cannot last much longer, and national bankruptcy, notwithstanding the imprudent measures taken to avoid such a catastrophe, is bound to be the immediate consequence.

“ As for the clergy, things will not go so well as we had hoped at first. Very few people offer to buy church property ; and in all Paris, I only know of two religious buildings which have been sold. However, the new decrees regulating the government of the Church in this country are being daily put into force, and several cathedrals have already been closed. The cathedral of Paris, which is still open, will probably suffer the same fate either this or next week. The bishops behave very well in general ; some of those whose sees have been suppressed by the new laws have protested, and declare that they will rather die than renounce a jot of the authority which they

received from God and not from man. One alone, however, has submitted to the new laws, for which conduct he has been universally blamed. Those who have not yet made up their minds are waiting to hear what the court of Rome says ; and it is generally believed that it will express its opinion firmly and clearly. The Archbishop of Paris will soon be recalled : what will his reply be ? I know not, but I hope that it will be worthy of his predecessor, Christophe de Beaumont.* He is still in Savoy living upon charity, for he has not received one farthing of his stipend. You are aware that part of his diocese has been given to the new see instituted by our governors at Versailles. The new bishop has not been nominated so far, but the electors have already been convoked. The district of Quimper in Brittany has already elected its own bishop. How and by whom will he be consecrated ? Time will show. . . . It is evident that this new scheme will be the cause of much confusion. I have not purchased the ornaments of which you spoke to me, because none have been offered for sale ; many people say that it is forbidden to buy such articles because they are stolen property. What do you think about the matter ? You have probably heard that all foreign communities are allowed to keep their property provided that they can prove that that property was purchased with foreign money. But you do not know, perhaps, that we owe this favour to Mr. Walker, an English gentleman and a Protestant, who pleaded the cause of his compatriots with the greatest fervour. Your friends† at the Récollets are well and send you and your family their most affectionate greetings. I would gladly turn this page, but time flies ;

* Christophe de Beaumont (1703-1781), after having been Bishop of Bayonne and Archbishop of Vienne, was made Archbishop of Paris, much to his distress, for this excellent and charitable man was as humble as he was good. He was several times exiled from court on account of his fearless speech ; he was not afraid, either, to blame the parliament. Having offended Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the latter wrote him his famous " Lettre a M. de Beaumont." He also opposed the *Jansénistes*, by which he made many enemies. He was Archbishop of Paris until his death.

† The Abbé's mother and sister.

I only have a moment to assure you, my true friend, that my feelings for you are still, and will always be, the same.

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

Hitherto the king had refused to sign the civil constitution of the clergy ; however, on December 26th, 1790, he gave his consent. An immediate result of this step was noticed on the morrow, when fifty-eight ecclesiastics went in a body to the *Assemblée nationale* and swore fealty to the new constitution. But fifty-eight *curés* counted for nothing in France where religion had hitherto been something more than an empty phrase.

The Pope having placed a ban upon the constitution, which he considered a direct attack upon his authority, the greater part of the Catholic clergy refused to take the oath required of them. Those priests who had sworn to obey the new constitution were shunned as black sheep, considered worthy of excommunication; and condemned by their brethren in religion to suffer everlasting torments.

CHAPTER III

The Abbé Edgeworth receives another invitation to return to Ireland : He refuses to leave France : Mesdames de Lamoignon and D'Aguesseau, the Duchesses de Doudeauville and D'Ayen : Mme. Elisabeth de France : Joseph II., Emperor of Germany, pays a visit to the Court of Versailles : Mme. Elisabeth wishes to enter a convent : The *Assemblée* passes some important decrees : The Abbé Edgeworth is appointed father-confessor to Mme. Elisabeth : Family dissensions : Marie-Antoinette's love for her children.

THE Abbé for many years had ceased all communications with the elder branch of the Edgeworth family ; the conduct of some of his Protestant relatives after his father's death was probably responsible for this fact ; however, he frequently corresponded with his brothers, Robert and Ussher, and took care to keep them informed of the health and well-being of his mother and sister. Between Robert and Henry a very tender affection existed ; but the youngest brother, Ussher, had a strange disposition ; it is said that after the Abbé's death he refused to allow any copies to be made of the letters and papers which he, as his sole surviving brother, had inherited.

The events of 1790 made the Abbé's brothers anxious for the safety of their relatives in Paris ; they wrote begging the exiles to return to their native land ; this step, however, the mother and sister would not take unless the Abbé accompanied them, and he felt that

he could not leave the little flock confided to his charge.

His importance had lately been increased by his appointment as father-confessor to several great ladies of the court, among them Mesdames de Lamoignon and d'Aguesseau and the Duchesses de Doudeauville and d'Ayen, who placed complete confidence in his teachings and allowed him to direct their consciences.

Mesdames de Lamoignon and d'Aguesseau both married into the de Malesherbes family, the most distinguished member of which was the defender of Louis XVI. But Mme. d'Aguesseau, *née* de Lamoignon, had married her cousin, the last scion of the d'Aguesseau family, under protest ; it was even said that she had shed tears on her wedding-day because she thought she ought to have made a better match and would be unable to appear at court. Yet she had not made such a bad marriage after all, for her husband, Jean Baptiste d'Aguesseau, after being deputy for the nobility at the *Etats Généraux*, had been made a member of the *Tiers Etat*. Both she and Mme. de Lamoignon, with whose husband, Chrétien François II., the family of de Lamoignon became extinct, emigrated, together with Mme. de Doudeauville, Duchesse de La Rochefoucault-Doudeauville and heiress of the valuable estate of Doudeauville near Boulogne-sur-mer ; this lady, descendant of Louvois, the friend and minister of Louis XIV., was later forced to emigrate with her husband, a major in the 2nd regiment of light horse, notwithstanding the fact that they were both extremely charitable. To the Duchesse de Doudeauville Paris owes the hospital of La Rochefoucault. It is creditable

to the duke that, although forced to emigrate, he did not follow the example of so many thousands of his compatriots, but refused to fight against the country of his birth.

Few victims of the Revolution had a more tragic fate than the Duchesse d'Ayen, who mounted the steps of the guillotine supporting her aged mother, the Maréchale de Noailles, and consoling her young daughter, the Vicomtesse de Noailles, the newly-made wife of Louis de Noailles, whose noble conduct in voting for the abolition of federal rights on the memorable night of August 4th had been powerless to save her from a horrible death.

The Duc d'Ayen emigrated in time to save his life, but not his honour. He was not the only noble who left his nearest and dearest to face the fury of the Revolution. His wife met death with a courage above all praise. She was tending a sick fellow-prisoner when she learnt that she and her aged mother and her daughter were in a few short hours to mount the steps of the scaffold. She expressed no surprise, but continued to attend to the comfort of the suffering friend, and on her return to her cell begged her daughter to lie down and rest, that she might have strength to face the end.

Among the members of the clergy who emigrated with their powerful supporters was the Abbé Madier, the father-confessor of Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire, the king's aunts, who fled to Italy with those ladies in February, 1791. He was also father-confessor to the king's sister, Mme. Elisabeth, one of the most pathetic victims of the Revolution; for, had she followed the example of

her brothers, the Comtes de Provence and d'Artois, she might have lived many years—years of exile, no doubt, years of discord and humiliation at the hands of her brothers. Although Mme. Elisabeth was not exempt from the family failing, extravagance—she, too, was always in debt—her courageous fidelity to Louis XVI. and his family arouse alike sympathy and pity.

Born May 3rd, 1764, Elisabeth-Philippine-Marie-Hélène de France was the eighth and last child of Louis Dauphin of France and Marie-Josèphe de Saxe his second wife, both of whom died soon after her birth. She passed the first years of her childhood partly at Versailles and partly at Montreuil, the property of Mme. de Marsan, governess to the children of France, a superannuated coquette who, luckily for her little pupil, was soon obliged by her ever-increasing infirmities to resign her post before she could spoil the fresh young mind confided to her charge. Her successor was Mme. de Mackau, mother of the charming Mme. de Bombelles, whose memoirs are so justly popular in France.

The little Elisabeth experienced her first loss when her elder sister Clotilde, who had taught her as a baby to lisp the letters of the alphabet, kissed her and dried her childish tears and generally acted as her little mother, left France to marry the Prince of Piedmont. The royal house of Savoy had already furnished two brides to the royal house of France, and was now about to receive a princess in exchange ; it is true that she was very plain, and—what was worse—there was far too much of her. At the time of her marriage, indeed, a neat but cruel epigram went the round of Paris :

“ Au bon Savoyard qui réclame
 Le prix de son double présent,
 En retour, nous donnons Madame !
 Ma foi, c'est payé grassement.”

She had, however, one great charm : she was always gentle and willing to please ; and her features, if plain, were constantly illumined by a kind and gracious smile. The little Elisabeth adored her elder sister, and her grief at her departure was so great that about this time she became subject to fainting-fits.

Among the playfellows chosen to make the little eleven-year old princess forget her loss were Rouget de l'Isle, to be known to posterity as the author of the *Marseillaise*, Angélique de Mackau, later the Marquise de Bombelles, and Mlle .de Causans, daughter of one of the princess's ladies-in-waiting.

Two years later, although Elisabeth was scarcely thirteen years of age, two suitors came forward to beg for her hand. Of these two suitors one, the Infante of Portugal,* Prince of Brazil, was three years younger than the princess whom his relatives wished him to marry, while the Duke of Aosta† was five years her senior. But neither of these proposals came to anything.

* John VI., King of Portugal (1767-1826), 3rd son of Peter III. and Queen Maria, was appointed regent of that country in 1793, in consequence of his mother's mind having given way. In 1807 Portugal was occupied by the French troops, and John VI. was obliged to retire with his family to Brazil, a Portuguese colony, where he took the title of Emperor of Brazil. Although proclaimed king of his native land in 1816, on the death of his mother, he did not return to that country until 1821. No sooner had he left Brazil than it declared its independence. Weak-willed, with excellent intentions, which he lacked the energy to carry out, he was completely ruled by his wife and the Marquis de Chaves, his favourite. He left two sons, Dom Pedro (Peter IV.) and Dom Miguel, celebrated for their hatred of one another.

† Victor-Emmanuel I., Duke of Aosta (1759-1824), later known as the King of Sardinia. He ascended the throne in 1802, after the abdication of his brother Charles-Emmanuel II., but only reigned in

In the year 1777, Joseph II. of Germany had paid a visit to the court of his sister, whose only true friend he eventually became. He saw much there to displease him ; for although he was so unlucky that he had this inscription engraved upon his tombstone : " Here lies Joseph II., who was unlucky in all his undertakings,"* he was a keen observer. On the occasion of this visit, although invited to stay at the *château* of Versailles he preferred to lodge in an *hôtel* and to be free to come and go as he chose. He regarded the clergy of France with a very unfavourable eye, and did not hesitate to chide his indolent, easy-going brother-in-law for his indifference to his people's welfare, to which advice Louis accorded no reply, but only smiled good-naturedly and changed the subject. Joseph II. thoroughly appreciated the qualities for which the French nation has always been famous, but he saw that the burden of the poor was becoming too heavy to be borne any longer. On one occasion he said, *à propos* of Louis XVI.'s habit of *laissez-faire* :

" I much fear, my dear brother, that your system of governing would not answer in any other land. However, we are in France, where foreign innovations in matters

Sardinia, Piedmont and Savoy being in the possession of France. In 1814 he received back his possessions on the continent, which were increased in the following year by the Duchy of Genoa, Monaco, and Annecy. Although he had seen the rise of the French Revolution, and knew what abuses had caused that upheaval, he ruled with an iron hand in his own states. The Piedmontese having demanded and been denied a constitution, a revolution broke out in 1821, and Victor-Emmanuel abdicated in favour of his brother Charles-Felix rather than give in to his subjects' wishes.

* Shortly before his death Joseph II. called his favourite, the Prince de Ligne, to his bedside, and said : " Your country has been the death of me. The taking of Ghent was the beginning of the end ; the abandonment of Brussels was the last blow. What affronts I have had to swallow ! One would have to be made of stone to bear what I have borne ! "

appertaining to government are not welcome and do not seem to succeed."

So highly did Frederick the Great think of Marie-Antoinette's brother that he wrote in a letter to Voltaire :

" Joseph is an emperor such as Germany has not had for a long time. Educated in splendour, his habits are simple ; grown up amidst flattery, he is still modest ; inflamed with a love of glory, he yet sacrifices his ambition to his duty."

Joseph II. had one or two little peculiarities among his many good qualities ; his punctiliousness in questions concerning religious ceremonies caused his brother Frederick to give him the nickname of " the Sacristan."

When Joseph II. paid another visit to his sister in 1781, rumour declared that he had come to ask for the hand of Mme. Elisabeth in marriage. He had already been married twice and death had carried off both his wives. The first, the Infanta Isabella of Parma, who died in child-birth, had been most tenderly loved by her husband. She had been married to Joseph II. against her will, having formed an attachment for a nobleman at her father's court, and had never been able to forget her first love ; but her coldness did not prevent Joseph worshipping her with a love which could not be consoled when death took her and her baby from a life of disappointments. Joseph grieved so deeply for her and her child that he fell ill. In vain did his sister, Marie-Christine, endeavour to console him ; at last, unable to bear his lamentations any longer, she blurted out the cruel truth which the dead wife had once whispered in her ear :

" *Eh ! mon Dieu*, calm yourself : she never loved you ! "



Photo

MADAME ELIZABETH OF FRANCE

Nourdin

Although Marie-Antoinette was inclined to be fond of her lonely little sister-in-law, it is doubtful whether she considered her worthy to wear the imperial crown of Germany. It is true that some of the portraits of *Babet* (as her brothers called her), especially those by Boizot, le Beau and Basset, represent her as a plain and very haughty lady ; but the picture by an unknown artist, now at Versailles, of Elisabeth as a little child holding a remarkably ugly poodle on her lap, is that of a sweet little maid whose wistful expression reminds us that she was doubly orphaned before two summers had passed over her head ; and the miniatures painted by Desmaysons and Sicardi show the Princess Elisabeth in all the freshness of girlhood, with an expression of softness which is entirely missing in the three first-named portraits.

Marie-Antoinette saw her sister-in-law very seldom during her brother's visit to the court of Versailles. It may have been only by chance that the young princess was kept in the background. Certain it is that the Emperor left France without having spoken the fateful word. Whether or not the Emperor made any impression upon the princess, it is impossible to say. Be this as it may, it was not long after his departure that she expressed a desire to follow the example of her aunt Louise, and seek refuge from the world in a convent. But this step Louis XVI., whose family affection was one of his finest qualities, refused to allow her to take until she had attained her majority ; that is to say, her twenty-fifth year. Hoping to wean her from this idea, he purchased from Mme. de Mackau the property of Montreuil near Versailles and gave it to her. Montreuil, with its gardens and coppices, was

a perfect store-house of memories of happy spring and summer days spent in her childhood amid her little friends, first under the charge of the Comtesse de Marsan and then under Mme. de Mackau, who became owner of the estate when Mme. de Marsan retired. How quickly the hours had fled in those happy days ! How long the weary days seemed now ! How many delightful occupations had filled each day and hour—tending her little garden, taking lessons in botany from Dr. Monnier, whom the peasantry at Montreuil called “ the good angel,” and the hundred and one games dear to children of all climes. How little she had to occupy her now—some needle work, a good deal of alms-giving, and for the rest, long hours of meditation darkened by regrets for the youth which she was leaving behind her.

At eighteen years of age she had been heard to say *à propos* of her marriage to a foreign prince :

“ I can only marry a king’s son, and the son of a king must reign over his father’s dominions. In that case I should no longer be French, and I do not wish to lose my nationality. It would be better for me to remain here at the foot of my brother’s throne.”

It is probable that the lonely princess turned to religion to seek compensation for what Fate and ambitious relations had withheld from her. The departure of her father-confessor with *Mesdames* left a blank in her spiritual existence. The following letter from the Abbé Edgeworth to his friend, Dr. Moylan, gives a description of some of the scenes which had prompted the Abbé Madier and many of his brother-priests to leave France.

“ January 9th, 1791.

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAR FRIEND,

“ I am sure you are curious to know how matters are going with this unhappy country, and I am grieved to be obliged to tell you that if the Almighty does not deign to accomplish a miracle in our favour, I see very little chance of things mending. You have probably heard that the *Assemblée* proposes that all men, no matter what their station in life may be, and especially the clergy, shall take an oath by which they swear fidelity to the nation, to the laws of the country, and to the king, and by which they also swear to uphold the new constitution with all their might, on pain of losing their rights as citizens, and their positions as civil servants, soldiers or ecclesiastics. This oath, as you can imagine, has given rise to the most violent discussions ; however, it was voted, like everything else, by an immense majority ; it was immediately submitted for the king's approval. He asked for time to consult the court of Rome, and a courier was despatched. But the king, before he had had time to receive the reply, sanctioned the decree ; whereupon a day was immediately fixed for the ecclesiastical members of the *Assemblée* to take the oath, and eighty of their number (including one bishop) full of zeal for the discipline introduced in the Gallican Church, asked to be allowed to take the oath without waiting for the day fixed. You may imagine with what applause this patriotic enthusiasm was received. All the other bishops and clergy resolved to wait in silence for the fatal day. Several of their number thought that they had better show their determination by not attending the meeting, which act, according to the decree, was enough to deprive them of their bishoprics ; however, they all ended by going to the *Assemblée* as usual, with the Cardinal de La Rochefoucault at their head. As the hour for taking the oath approached, every means was employed to force them to obey. An enraged populace threatened to murder them. The tribunes and passages were full of angry people ; nevertheless, to the eternal honour of the Church of France, they

protested, like true heroes, that they were ready to die, but that they would never consent to take an oath which went against their conscience. Their firmness was admired even by the populace, and the sanguinary cries of the multitude were followed by the most profound silence. In the midst of this silence they arose and left the hall without receiving the slightest insult from the people, who, only a minute before, had been mad with anger. The other members of the *Assemblée* immediately ordered the president to go to the king and demand him to execute the decree, which meant, that his Majesty was to issue a proclamation stating that other bishops would be appointed to fill the sees of all those who had not taken the oath. What will be the end of all this? God only knows; but the intrepid courage of our prelates seems to have made the deepest impression upon the *émigrés*. Twenty-eight ecclesiastics out of the eighty who took the oath have publicly retracted, and it is hoped that many more will do the same.

“So far I have only written concerning the ecclesiastical members of the *Assemblée*. One hundred and nineteen bishops have already adhered to their declaration and have resolved to share their fate. These include all the clergy of France; and we must confess that it would be difficult to find another example of similar conduct in the history of the Church. This was the morning fixed for the taking of the oath in all the churches in Paris. The *curés* received their invitations a week ago. I have waited until now to fasten up my letter so that I might tell you the result. As you are aware, there are fifty-two in Paris, and I am told that only nine have taken the oath. You cannot imagine what scandalous measures have been taken in order to force them to act contrary to their convictions. At Saint-Sulpice the populace ran riot. The *curé*, who is a young man, most talented and still more virtuous, received twenty-two letters last night, by which he clearly saw that certain persons had planned to murder him this morning if he refused to take the oath. Notwithstanding the danger, he ascended into the pulpit

and spoke with the greatest vehemence ; he certainly would have fallen a victim to his zeal if his parishioners had not closed round him as he came down from the pulpit, and protected him from a band of brigands who had been sent to the church to murder him. He knows the name of a man who yesterday received the sum of 1,100 *livres* to kill him this morning ; but, notwithstanding the entreaties of the mayor, he has refused to give his name. The *curés* of Sainte-Marguerite, Saint-Paul, Saint-Gervais, and Saint-Jean de Grève have made off, thinking it more prudent to retire than to face a furious mob.

“ Such is the present condition of this unhappy city. What will it be in a month from now ? If the *Assemblée* triumphs, we shall see schism firmly established in a few weeks’ time. All communications with Rome have ceased ; and eighty-three schismatical bishops elected in the place of the one hundred and thirty-six at present existing, will force us to exercise our holy profession in caves as you used to do in Ireland. Everything is still quiet at the Missions étrangères ; we are not obliged to take the oath, because we are not considered public men ; but I think that the mission will share the fate of all the other religious establishments and will be suppressed in a few weeks’ time. I beg you to forgive this long letter, but I thought you would be glad to know how matters stand in this country. The houses belonging to the suppressed convents are for sale, but the church ornaments are left untouched, I know not why.

“ Receive, Monseigneur and dear friend, my respects and those of all my friends here.

“ Ever yours affectionately,

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

In view of this description of the trials and dangers to which the clergy of France were exposed, it is not surprising to learn that the Abbé Madier had left France. To fill the blank left in her spiritual existence by his departure, Mme. Elisabeth applied to the Superior of the

Séminaire des Missions étrangères, begging him to find her another confessor. The Superior, knowing no priest more worthy than the Abbé Edgeworth to direct the princess's conscience, recommended him to her. She had already heard his name mentioned by Mme. de Doudeauville ; and in a letter addressed to Mme. de Raigecourt* (her little playmate Mlle. de Causans, now married and known to the princess as *Rage*), and dated February 12th, 1791, she wrote :

“ Try and imagine, *mon cœur*, my anguish on addressing another priest for the first time, I who have never confessed to any priest except Father Madier since the age of nine or ten ! I have almost made up my mind. I think I shall choose Mme. de Doudeauville's father-confessor ; they speak very highly of him, and I believe he is neither too severe nor too lenient. I will let you know my decision as soon as I have quite made up my mind. I am sure that you must be feeling rather vexed with me because I did not choose your *curé*, and you probably think that I did not do so because I had already seen him. Nothing of the sort. My only reason for not choosing your *curé* was not because I did not like him but because I thought it wiser to choose a *curé* who was less talked about ; and therefore I hope to be able to keep him. Besides, the idea that I may have to *trundle* my soul about in search of a father-confessor does not please me . . . ”

Before accepting the elevated post of father-confessor to Mme. Elisabeth de France, the Abbé had to obtain the sanction of the Bishop of Paris ; † this was an easy matter, however, for he enjoyed such universal esteem that the

* Mme. de Raigecourt and her husband emigrated shortly after, and went to stay at Trèves.

† Gobel, Jean Baptiste Joseph (1727-1794), a parish priest in Alsace-Lorraine, was elected by the clergy of Belfort to represent them at the *Etats Généraux*. Having accepted the civil constitution of the clergy,

THE ROYAL FAMILY'S TROUBLES 55

bishop not only gave his consent but came in person to the Séminaire des Missions étrangères to congratulate him.

The princess was in need of someone to whom she could tell all her griefs and troubles, for a letter written by Marie-Antoinette to her sister during the spring of 1791 betrays the fact that discord reigned among the members of the royal family.

"My sister (Mme. Elisabeth) is so indiscreet, so surrounded by intriguers and so influenced by her brother abroad, that we dare not speak to one another lest we should quarrel all day . . . Our home is a perfect hell . . ."

A few weeks later Count Fersen wrote to the Baron von Taube that Marie-Antoinette had confided to him that she was by no means anxious to see the Prince de Condé, her cousin, victorious, for she added : "It would be rather hard to owe our salvation to that cursed one-eyed fellow." *

To make matters worse, the royal family, ever since October, 1789, when they had been brought back forcibly to the Tuileries, had been in a state of imprisonment. Arthur Young speaks of having seen the little Dauphin playing in the gardens of the Tuileries "with a little hoe and rake," under the supervision of two soldiers. National guards slept outside the queen's room, and did not scruple to open the door and ask her what she was about if they heard any noise during the night ; eight soldiers likewise kept watch outside Mme. Elisabeth's room. It is true that the royal family were allowed to take driving

he was made bishop of the three *départements* of Seine, Haute-Marne, and Haut-Rhin, and later Bishop of Paris. He abjured his opinions in 1793, but was compromised by the *Hébertistes*, condemned to death, and guillotined.

* *Ce maudit borgne.*

and riding exercise in the environs of Paris, but these expeditions could scarcely have been pleasurable, for, on such occasions, the prisoners were always accompanied by mounted guards who amused themselves by trying to hear what the royal family were saying. All sorts of absurd stories were circulated concerning the character of Louis XVI. ; it was commonly believed that he was brutal and cruel to his servants. A woman was one day declaring that she had seen him, on meeting a little child in a narrow lane, lift up his foot and give it a kick which sent it flying several feet into the air. "Is that all?" replied a future *tricoteuse*, who probably wished her neighbour to think that she knew quite as much about court life as she did, "Is that all? I saw him knock a man down with his fist and hurt him horribly! . . ."

Louis XVI. was accused of many things which he never did and of crimes which, when committed three centuries before, had scarcely excited a protest. But the bulwark of infallibility erected around the sacred persons of the kings of France by the court in its own interest was rapidly being broken down.

Marie-Antoinette's love for her children is admirably shown in the following letter written by her to Mme. de Tourzel when that lady took the place of Mme. de Polignac, one of the first *aristocrates* to emigrate. This letter chiefly concerns the little Dauphin, who went by the name of the *chou d'amour*.

" July 25th, 1789.

" My son is four years and four months old all but two days. I will say nothing of his outward appearance; one only has to see him to love him. He has always

enjoyed good health, but even when he was in the cradle we noticed that his nerves were delicate. He cut his first teeth very late ; however, they came through without any trouble. It was while he was cutting his sixth tooth at Fontainebleau, I think, that he had an attack of convulsions. Since then he has had two more, but the last was very slight. He is so highly strung that the slightest noise to which he is not accustomed terrifies him. For instance, he is afraid of dogs, because he has heard them bark round him. I have never forced him to have a dog, because I think he will become less timid as he grows older. He is like all healthy children, very thoughtless, very heedless and very passionate in his fits of temper ; but he is a good-hearted child, gentle and affectionate when his giddiness does not get the better of him. . . . He always keeps his word, but he is very indiscreet and he is much given to repeating what he has heard other people say ;* and often, without meaning to tell a lie, he adds what his imagination has led him to believe is true. This is his great fault, and one for which he must be corrected. Otherwise, I repeat, he is a good child, and if we are sensible and at the same time firm without being harsh, we can always do what we like with him. But severity would only harden him, for he has a great deal of spirit for his years. For instance, when he was quite a tiny child he could not bear the word 'forgiveness.' I can make him do anything and endure anything when he has done wrong, but I can only make him ask for forgiveness at the cost of many tears and infinite trouble. I have always accustomed my children to confide in me and to tell me themselves of their little faults when they have been naughty. So when I scold them, I try to look more sad than angry. I have also accustomed them to understand that when I have said 'yes,' or 'no,' I shall not take back my word ; but I always explain my reasons to them so that they may not think that I only do so

* Does not this sentence account for certain assertions made by the little Dauphin while being cross-examined by the *Tribunal révolutionnaire* ?

because I am angry. My son does not know how to read, and he is very backward ; he is much too thoughtless to apply himself to his book. He is not at all conceited and I hope he will continue not to be so ; our children learn all too soon what their station in life is. He loves his sister very tenderly and is kind-hearted. Whenever he has been invited to go somewhere, or whenever he has been given anything he likes very much, he always asks that his sister may be allowed to share his pleasures. He was born with a happy disposition. It is necessary for his health that he should be out of doors as much as possible, and I think it is better to let him play and dig about on the terrace than to take him long walks ; the exercise which children take while playing and running in the fresh air is better for them than forcing them to walk, which often tires their little backs. . . .”

Such was the child—so nervous and timid that the barking of a dog terrified him, so tenderly loved by his parents, his aunt, and his sister—who was done to death by the excobbler Simon ; for when he was released from Simon’s clutches his mind and his body were ruined for ever.

CHAPTER IV

Strange scenes enacted in the churches of Paris : The king's illness : The *Père Duchesne* and *La Plainte de la Mère Duchesne* : Death of Mirabeau : More decrees are passed.

IN a letter written at the beginning of 1791, Mme. Elisabeth told her friend, Mme. de Raigecourt, that she had just returned from a church where the vicar had said mass to a congregation of "brigands" who, during the service, had flung the chairs at each other's heads, had stopped the organist only to make him begin again, and had generally behaved in a riotous manner ; the faithful having yelled themselves hoarse, a priest had ascended the pulpit-stairs and informed his flock that he had just come from Saintes, where his bishop had placed a price upon his head because he had taken the oath of obedience to the new constitution. The same scene had been enacted at the church of Saint-Roch because the officiating clergy had insisted upon being incensed by their acolytes.

The Church of France was indeed in a strange state. Several of the clergy, including the Abbé Emery, had endeavoured to reconcile the *intransigent* priests with those who wished to march with the times, but they had a hard task before them. The provinces were more reluctant to accept the new constitution than Paris, and

the Mayor of Strasburg was severely whipped for wishing to dismiss the chapter. In Bourgogne the clergy declared that they would not acknowledge the new order. Those who wished to have their marriage blessed by the Church found themselves in an awkward position ; they could either have recourse to the services of a renegade priest or to a refractory priest, and run the risk, if the fact were discovered, of being separated by force, while the bridegroom might be accused, like Chateaubriand, of trying to abduct an innocent female.

Mme. Elisabeth, though she too, like her aunts and her brother the Comte d'Artois, might have saved her life by flight, had refused to abandon the king in his hour of need. In her loneliness she felt the need of someone to whom she could confide her present griefs and future fears, and in a letter to her friend *Rage*, referring to the discord that reigned at the Tuileries, she expressed her satisfaction at finding in the Abbé Edgeworth all that she could desire in her father-confessor :

“ *March 18th, 1791.*

“ I would willingly believe that it is the will of God that such things should happen. . . . I hope that the Abbé de Firmont by his advice will enable me to save my soul. From this you may guess that he has taken the place of the Abbé Madier in my conscience. I confessed to him yesterday. I was quite content with him ; he is gentle, witty, and he possesses a profound knowledge of human nature. I hope to find in him what I have long needed in order to make progress in my pious devotions. Thank the Almighty for me, *mon cœur*, that He has deigned by a special act of Providence to allow me to make the acquaintance of this worthy man, and ask Him to help me to obey all the commands which He may send me

through this priest, His servant. As you may imagine, your princess was so embarrassed she did not know what to do, and her embarrassment was increased by her various misfortunes. Only fancy ! Mme. de Navarre * ushered him into my study without telling me that he had arrived. I felt uncomfortable. We sat for some time looking at each other in silence, neither of us knowing what to say ! At last I ran to fetch my hood, in order to conceal my embarrassment, and on my return I went and knelt in my confessional. My embarrassment soon left me, and I do not think I shall feel awkward again."

During the month of March, 1791, the king had been ill, upon which occasion Hébert* in his famous *Père Duchesne*, which he had lately begun to publish, had burst forth into the following lament :

" No ! I can find no pleasure in life ; wine tastes bitter to me, I hate the smell of tobacco. My king, my good king is ill ! Frenchmen, weep with me ! Our king is obliged to keep his bed ; the restorer of liberty to France is in bed. Oh ! his heart is ever in the midst of his people whom he loves d—d well, and by whom he is beloved."

This outburst of grief did not prevent *Père Duchesne* publishing a few months later one of his most violent tirades against his " good king " ; the title-page bore this inscription :

Good-day ! Good work !

or

The Birthday Ode of Louis the Traitor, ci-devant king of the French.

* Mme. de Navarre was one of Mme. Elisabeth's ladies-in-waiting.

† Hébert, Jacques René (1755-1794), one of the Revolution's worst servants. Having been dismissed for dishonesty from his two first situations as check-taker at the Théâtre des Variétés and as a doctor's servant, he took to journalism. His *Père Duchesne* won for him the post of substitute to the Attorney-General of the Republic. Robespierre had him arrested in consequence of his desire to invest the *Commune* with all the power of the *Convention*. He and his partisans, the *Hébertistes*, were executed by the guillotine.

“Grand speech delivered by Père Duchesne, who sentences the villain to be ‘shortened’ together with the infamous Marie-Antoinette and all the other beasts belonging to the menagerie for having endeavoured to put France to fire and sword and murder all good citizens ! ”

Months of procrastination and broken promises lie between those two numbers of *Père Duchesne*.

The periodical obtained tremendous success ; it was soon followed by a ballad or plaint, also from the pen of Hébert, which was sold in the streets of Paris and eagerly purchased and sung by every little *saute-ruisseau* and *mitron* in the capital. The imitation of the highly popular *Père Duchesne* was entitled : *La Plainte de la Mère Duchesne*. That worthy dame begins her litany of lamentations thus :

“Is it not a crying shame to think that the rich only pay six *sols* for a bottle of red or white wine, whereas the poor have to pay as much for the dregs ? If we go a-fairing on a Sunday and we want to buy a few bottles to comfort our hearts during the week, a whole army of clerks come and turn our pockets inside out ; and if by chance they lay their hands on a bottle, they make as much fuss about the matter as if we had tried to steal the Holy Ampulla.* . . . Why don’t they tax carriages, footmen, and such sickening luxuries ? It would diminish the number of people run over in the streets every year.

“And then, why are the bishops and *curés* given 400,000, 200,000, and 150,000 *livres* a year ? Is it not that they may have beautiful equipages, that they may keep a better table than the king, that they may gamble all night, that they may keep opera-dancers ? . . . What

* The Holy Ampulla is a small vessel containing oil said to have been brought down from Heaven by a dove in order to serve at the anointing of Clovis, king of the Gauls. This vessel, which is kept in the cathedral of Rheims, was always used to anoint the kings of France. It was thrown to the ground and much damaged in 1793 during the Revolution by the *conventionnel* Ruhl.

good are all those snobbish little *abbés* with their pyramids of curls mounting up to the sky? And the seminarians with their locks sticking straight out round their heads?

"All these priestlings (*frocaille*) fancy themselves fit to be the Pope's chief mustard-pot bearers just because they do nothing and because they grunt through their noses two or three paternosters which neither make the corn grow nor cheapen bread. I ain't learnt any Latin; but if I had my say, I'd tell them that they had better spend their little perquisites in building good charity schools where our children could go and learn what they call arithmetics or something which might be of use to them, or else build hospitals for the sick and the lame, or homes for the poor little orphans . . ."

The Revolution was the outcome of centuries of poverty and oppression, of ignorance and superstition. It must be allowed that the *Père Duchesne* was very outspoken.

"Man's greatest misfortune is his ignorance, d—— it all! Despotism is the work of ignorance, and fanaticism is superlative ignorance; for, d—— me, if men had only had a little common sense, they would never have allowed themselves to be taken in by the jugglers' tricks of those tonsured mountebanks, or to be roped, muzzled, and garotted for centuries by scoundrels who dare to call themselves princes, kings, and emperors. The first priest was a devil who happened to possess a little more of the gift of the gab than the savages among whom he lived. He had noticed that his cat washed its face and that his donkey twitched its ears whenever the weather was about to change. Proud of having made this discovery, he used the knowledge thus gained in order to deceive and rob his fellow-creatures by telling them that the Eternal Father, or maybe the devil himself, always whispered in his ear whenever it was going to be fine or whenever he might expect rain."

These extracts show not only that the King of France

had fallen into singular disfavour with the people, but that the clergy were equally unpopular. Nevertheless, as Mme. Elisabeth wrote to her friend *Bombe* (Mme. de Bombelles) who had emigrated and was now staying at the Hôtel de France, Stuttgart:

“A magnificent *Te Deum* is to be sung at Notre Dame to-day * for the king's recovery; the *Assemblée* is going to attend. A *curé* who has taken the oath is to officiate. This is a trick in order to install the new clergy in the metropolis.”

Two days later she tells the same friend that she is going to Saint-Cyr. This establishment, instituted by Louis XIV. at the request of Mme. de Maintenon for the education of nobly-born young ladies, had suffered grievously by the law of August 4th, 1789, which deprived it of a yearly revenue of 100,000 *livres*, while a subsequent law, by abolishing perpetual vows and suppressing religious communities, was to deal a deadly blow to it, and to all similar establishments. Mme. Elisabeth describes her last visit to Saint-Cyr which had taken place October 25th, 1790; on this occasion she had been insulted by the villagers, with whom the *Dames de Saint-Cyr* were very unpopular.

“I hardly dare go there again,” she writes; “the villagers are so spiteful towards the ladies that they may come and search the house on the morrow on the plea that I have brought a counter-revolution from Paris.”

In her next letter Mme. Elisabeth speaks of her father-confessor's desire to know all her thoughts and by such knowledge “help me to correct my faults.”

During this same month of March, 1791, the *Assemblée*

* This ceremony took place March 20th, 1791.

nationale issued a decree forbidding the king to go more than fifteen leagues from the capital where it held its meetings—in other words, he was not to leave the kingdom; if he did so, he was to be considered as having abdicated.

April brought fresh disasters to the royal cause, for on the 2nd Mirabeau died. Well might the royal family cry in anguish: "All hope is at an end for us!" for they were indeed in a grievous plight. It was said that Mirabeau's services for several weeks prior to his death had been paid for at the rate of 40,000 *francs* a week; and the sum was probably paid without a murmur, for all felt that this was a matter of life and death. It is reasonable to suppose that the rumour was correct, considering what a huge reward Mme. Bonaparte, not so very long after, received from Fouché for spying upon her husband, and in this case it was only a question of preventing the First Consul becoming emperor, as he had determined to do at all costs.

Mme. Elisabeth told her friend *Bombe* the news in a letter dated April 3rd:

"Mirabeau died yesterday morning. His arrival in the other world must have been a great shock to him. They say that he spent an hour with his *curé* before his death. I sincerely pity his unfortunate sister, who is very religious and who loved him to distraction. Politicians say that his death is a great misfortune; as for me, I shall wait before giving my opinion. I allow that he had great talents, but I did not know him well enough to feel his loss very deeply . . . The intruding *curés* were installed to-day. The bells all over Paris were rung in a most shameful manner; I felt terribly depressed. . . ."

In a letter written to her other friend, Mme. de

Raigecourt, she described the effect made upon her by these same bells, which the *Père Duchesne*, a few weeks later, demanded should be melted down and used for cannons and bronze money :

“ I write to you in a moment when those who believe in God and in His Church must experience some satisfaction. The intruders (the *curés* who had taken the oath of obedience) took up their residence this morning. I heard all the bells of Saint-Roch chiming. I cannot conceal from you the fact that the sound caused me to fly into a passion, which made me displeased with myself. I ought to be especially devout to-day in order to make some slight amends for all that is being done to anger God. And instead of that, I behaved as if I had gone quite crazy. I do not know how the good God will contrive to save my soul, for I certainly do very little to help Him. The *curé* of Saint-Roch said mass this morning at half-past five. There were a good many communicants. He preached an excellent sermon in which he spoke of persecution. Those who communicated were much touched . . . ”

In another letter upon the same subject, religious persecution, she writes :

“ The *Assemblée* goes on in its old way ; the guards are very proud of their epaulettes and the women are mighty content with their newly-acquired liberty. The churches are no longer visited except by uneducated folk, and the faithful attend to their devotions as best they can, trembling with fear lest they be still more cruelly persecuted, and accepting everything with resignation. You can imagine how edifying the clergy are with their trust in Providence and their resignation. We must imitate them, *mon cœur* ! . . . ”

Mme. Elisabeth's next letter to Mme. de Raigecourt contains much interesting information : that the court

still believed that the *émigrés* could and would save the royal family, that the king had planned to go to Saint-Cloud and that the writer had been guilty of over-eating herself ! It bears the date, May, 1791 :

“ I am taking advantage of Dampierre’s * departure to write you a confidential letter ; the news which I have received from you and from others is satisfactory, nevertheless I feel very anxious concerning the success of our plans. It seems to me that our court is rather badly informed concerning the policy of the different European cabinets. I do not know whether it is because people mistrust us, or because we are too self-confident. I must confess that, if nothing happens before the end of the month, I shall have much need of resignation in order to accept God’s will and face the prospect of another summer like the last, all the more so because things are going from bad to worse, because the cause of Religion is growing weaker and weaker, and those who still honour their faith are leaving for countries where they are free to pray as they like. What will become of us if Heaven does not take pity upon us ? A decree was passed yesterday by which people are led to believe that they are free to profess whatever religion they prefer ; but the fact of the matter is that we are in exactly the same position as we were three weeks ago ; the only difference is that one can perhaps purchase a church without running the risk of being flogged—that is all we can expect. Otherwise I am able to attend to my devotions as usual ; but I do not want to go to Saint-Cloud. You know how stupid I am ; I should not like to have to hear mass said at seven o’clock in the morning in the chapel of Saint-Cloud. I prefer to be baked alive in my own dull apartment here. . . . We take so little trouble, I verily believe we shall still be here when the first drum is heard in the

* Dampierre, Auguste-Henri-Marie-Picot de (1756-1793), a French general who commanded the *armée du Nord*, and was killed outside Valenciennes. The *Convention* honoured him by burying him in the Pantheon.

streets of Paris. I have not made up my mind as to what I shall do, but until now I have not been able to see my way to leave my dear country. However, I will not answer for it but that I might do so some day or the other. . . . I am still in a state of delight over the departure of the Abbé Madier. I am not so zealous over my religious duties as you were last year, but I feel that I much need somebody to 'shake up my soul' (as you put it). I see that, although I thought myself so perfect, I should have had to pass several centuries in Purgatory if Heaven had not looked to it, but luckily Providence has given me a well-educated, broad-minded, gentle but firm director who already knows me better than I know myself, and who will allow no backsliding. All this means, *ma petite*, that I have need of your prayers, for if I do not profit by God's grace, I shall have a terrible account to render. I much regret that I did not make his acquaintance long ago; for I should be bitterly disappointed if I had to say good-bye to him soon. . . . I am not so unhappy, *mon cœur*, as you imagine. My good spirits help me to keep up, and God is very merciful to me in my moments of weakness. I suffered much during Holy Week, but I felt calm again as soon as it was over. You guessed aright concerning my illness; however, one day I was really very unwell, and too much *blanc-mange* was the cause of my indisposition. . . . The nearer the moment approaches, the more incredulous I become. However, the news of ☉* is satisfactory. Everybody says that the principalities have formed a coalition to save us. I sincerely hope so—too sincerely, perhaps. I quite forget whether I told you that I did not think we should be able to leave Paris before your return. Don't let this news afflict you. The danger will be averted, for we shall be warned in time. . . ."

The Abbé Edgeworth had been warned too,—warned to be careful how he behaved and what he said during his

* The sign ☉ was used in writing of the Comte d'Artois by the royal family about this time.

visits to his royal penitent ; he was even recommended not to be seen going in and out of the Tuileries. Notwithstanding these warnings he continued to give Mme. Elisabeth all the comfort which religion could afford her. The king and queen seem to have expressed astonishment that he was never molested during these visits, and that he should be allowed to enter the Tuileries whenever he wished to do so. They themselves had been obliged to dismiss their own chaplains, upon which occasion *Père Duchesne* had published a catch-penny bearing this startling inscription :

“ *Père Duchesne's great joy* on hearing the news that the king has sent his chaplain-in-chief to the devil, together with the Pope and all the other tonsured fools. *Père Duchesne's great wrath* against the aristocratic bell-ringers and churchwardens, and his d——d patriotic motion to have the silver bell in the palace which gave the signal for the massacre of Saint Bartholomew melted down.”

The Abbé Edgeworth probably wondered how long he would escape the fate of his brethren in religion ; he himself told a friend in after years :

“ It is true that I never realised that I was in any danger ; and while other ecclesiastics dared not appear at court without assuming a disguise, I myself went in broad daylight twice or thrice a week without being once obliged to disguise myself. Verily when I consider those days of horror, I am surprised at my own courage ; but I suppose that Providence purposely closed my eyes to the danger. Although my presence excited some murmurs of discontent among the guards, I personally never received the slightest affront.”

The Abbé amply deserves the praise which Mr. J. G. Alger gives him in his “ Englishmen in the French

Revolution," when he says: "The Abbé Edgeworth, facing what he believed to be certain death, towers head and shoulders over his countrymen."

In a letter written to his aunt, Miss Ussher, the Abbé gave further details of the difficulties which the French clergy had to face in the exercise of their duties :

" Paris. *May 22nd, 1791.*

" MY DEAR AUNT,

" I have long owed you a reply to your last letter, but you know what an agitated life I lead, and how my troubles are increased by the present state of affairs in this country. Verily our position is inexpressibly sad. I need only tell you that we are obliged to say mass in our rooms, to go and hear the faithful confess in their own homes instead of hearing them in church, and administer the Last Sacraments to the sick without any ceremony, etc., etc. In short, we are in the same position which you were in forty years ago in Ireland ; there are still some churches open in Paris, but the schismatical clergy officiate there, and we are forbidden to hold any communications with them. However, the really apostolic behaviour of our bishop and, I can say with truth, of the greater part of the French clergy gives me cause to hope that, sooner or later, the Almighty will have mercy upon us. My mother scarcely notices the changes which are taking place, because she enjoys the privileges granted to the poor nuns with whom she lives ; they are allowed to dwell in their cloister and to practise their religion according to their conscience until death comes to cut them down. Verily it is a cruel sight to see these sanctuaries of virtue closed to thousands of persons who wish to live and die far from the world. As God allows such things, we must bow our heads in silence. . . . Pray for me, my dear aunt, and be assured that you will never pray for a more affectionate nephew or a better friend than

" HENRY EDGEWORTH."

CHAPTER V

The Prince de Conde's army : The flight to Varennes and the return to Paris : Disobedience of the king's brothers : The King of Sweden expresses his opinion concerning *Monsieur's* right to assume the title of Regent : The Comtesse de Provence and her rivals : The king writes to the *Assemblée nationale* : Marie-Antoinette and her sister-in-law.

DURING the month of May, 1791, several stirring scenes had been enacted. On the 3rd the Pope had been burnt in effigy in the gardens of the Palais Royal, and this had been made the occasion of a popular demonstration against *la calotte*. On May 9th a decree had been passed declaring that all briefs, bulls, and rescripts delivered by the Holy Father would be considered invalid in France without the sanction of the king and the legislative corps, on which Mme. Elisabeth, in a letter to her friend *Bombelinette* (Mme. de Bombelles), made the following comment :

“ So you see, *ma Bombe*, that we are on the high road to the most perfect schism and that we may soon expect to have a patriarch over us.”

The foreign powers were not idle, it is true, but the royal family were beginning to realise that they must not count upon the success of the *émigrés* who, under Marie-Antoinette's *borgne*, the Prince de Condé, formed a

heterogeneous army of waifs and strays, of whom Wickham* in a letter to Grenville wrote :

“ Condé lives in their midst as our feudal kings used to live among their barons ; the old are as difficult to manage as the young, and the priests are not any more reasonable ; all are equally dreaded by the royalists in France, who prefer the Jacobins to them—at least in the east of France.”

The army of the Prince de Condé contained men of sixty—a certain M. Bernard served as a common soldier, although he had passed that age—and boys in their teens ill-suited to endure the fatigues of a war in a foreign land.

M. H. Forneron, in his “ Histoire de l’Emigration,” tells us of a little soldier, almost a child, of the name of Corbehem, who fell exhausted during a long march and rolled into a flooded gutter, out of which he was fished by a motherly *cabaretière* who dried him in front of her fire as if he were a half-drowned kitten, fed him and treated him as if he were her own child.

The month of June is memorable for the flight to Varennes, when the unhappy monarch signed his own death-warrant and took the first step towards the scaffold ;

* William Wickham (1761-1840), a friend of Lord Grenville, owed his success in life to his knowledge of foreign languages, and was employed on the continent as a spy by the English government. In 1795, after spending some time in France, he was sent to Switzerland as Minister to the Swiss cantons ; however, he soon returned to France, where he made himself so unpopular that the Directoire in 1797 demanded his expulsion on the grounds that he was not a diplomatic agent, as he called himself, but a vulgar spy. He then went to Frankfort, where he only remained a year, returning to England in 1798, where he was made Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department. In June, 1799, he again went to Switzerland, and later joined the Russian and Austrian armies, where he was able to turn his talents to good account. In 1802 he returned to England and was made Chief Secretary for Ireland. The fact that, on his retirement in 1804, he was given a pension of £1,800 per annum shows what value the English government placed on his services.

for this fiasco, which began on the night of June 20th, only exasperated the French nation and ended in the incarceration of the royal family in the Temple.

Among Marie-Antoinette's friends was a certain Mr. Quentin Craufurd, an Englishman who had made his fortune in Manilla and had come to spend it in Paris. He had a favourite saying : " Make your fortune where you like, but spend it in Paris ! " and this maxim he proceeded to live up to, spending his time in riotous living and card-playing, very much in the same style as the modern *rastaquouère* from London, New York, Berlin, or Buenos Ayres does nowadays. Mr. Craufurd was a strange person for the queen to choose as her friend at a time when the Diamond Collar was still fresh in the minds of her subjects. They probably made friends over those interminable games of cards ; perhaps Mr. Craufurd obliged the queen with loans of money with which to pay her debts ; for Marie-Antoinette was a confirmed gambler, and, like her friend, the Princesse de Polignac, and many another high-born woman, was accustomed to wear a delicately coloured taffeta apron over her magnificent costume in order to prevent the gold pieces soiling her skirt ; and the apron was frequently black with dirt at the end of a night's play.

With this fine specimen of the English race lived a certain Mme. Sullivan, an Italian said some, others said an Englishwoman, whom he eventually married. Mme. Sullivan, who was an ardent royalist, was the alleged wife of the future King of Wurtemberg, who later married a daughter of George III. of England. This woman had made up her mind to save the royal family.

With the consent of Craufurd she obtained a passport for herself under the name of the Baronne de Korff, a Russian subject, who was anxious to return to her native land ; she then ordered a coach to be built according to a plan drawn by the Comte de Fersen, another of Marie-Antoinette's friends, who was to play an important rôle in the drama. The coach finished, it was taken to the courtyard of Fersen's *hôtel*, where it was seen, admired, examined, and commented upon by all the neighbouring busy-bodies. An equal disregard of all ideas of prudence was displayed when the coach, shortly before June 20th, was driven to the *hôtel* in the rue de Clichy, where Mr. Craufurd * and Mme. Sullivan usually resided. The proprietors of this *hôtel*, however, had prudently left Paris for a little visit to England, and had given orders to their manservant, a faithful creature, an Englishman named Tom Sayers, to carry the matter through.

It was arranged that the king's brother, the Comte de Provence, who had hitherto refused to emigrate, and who on February 20th of that very year had solemnly sworn not to leave France, was to escape by another route. Mme. Elisabeth, like several other actors in the tragic flight to Varennes, was left in ignorance of what was about to happen until within a few hours of her family's departure.

On being awakened from his first sleep on the night of June 20th, the Dauphin, who was then a particularly sweet and affectionate little boy of six years of age, asked what was going to happen, whereupon his mother replied :

* When Craufurd again left Paris in November, 1792, he was dubbed an *émigré*, and his valuable furniture, pictures, etc., sold.

"We are going away, away to a fortified place where there will be a great many soldiers." At this news the little boy sprang up in his bed, asked to be given his boots and his little sword, and was all eagerness to start. But nature was too strong for him, and before many minutes had passed his head was nodding on his governess's shoulder. When his sister tried to keep him awake by asking him what he thought they were going to do, and why he was dressed as a little girl, he replied in a sleepy voice: "We must be going to act a play as we are wearing a disguise." Poor child! the play was to be a tragedy, and he, the most innocent of the party, was doomed to suffer the cruellest fate.

Some precautions were taken; for instance, the Dauphin was disguised in a little girl's frock and the ladies of the party covered their heads with large hoods.

Doubts as to the success of the enterprise must have crossed the king's mind; for, before starting for Montmédy, he told Mme. de Tourzel, the children's governess, to save the little Dauphin at all costs, and gave her a paper bearing his signature in which he stated that she was taking the child out of France by his command.

It was about eleven o'clock at night when Mme. de Tourzel, carrying the little Dauphin in her arms and leading Madame Royale by the hand, slowly advanced across one of the interior courtyards of the Tuileries leading to a gate where the Comte de Fersen was waiting, disguised in a coachman's hat and big cloak, with a hackney-coach.

But before reaching the carriage the little trio had to traverse the open courtyard, in which two sentinels kept watch night and day. It may have been chance or gold

that made one of the soldiers turn his back upon the fugitives just as they passed him. The movement was so sudden that Madame Royale felt that it was intentional, and, turning to her governess, said in an agonised whisper : " They recognise us ! "

She was reassured by the arrival of the queen, who had slipped out of the palace and had come to help Mme. de Tourzel put the children of France into the hackney-coach. This done, the queen hastily returned to the palace and completed her own preparations for flight.

The Comte de Fersen drove Mme. de Tourzel and her precious charges to the neighbouring rue de l'Echelle, where the hackney-coach pulled up outside the Hôtel du Gaillarbois and waited for the other fugitives, who were to leave the Tuileries on foot and join the children and their governess. For nearly an hour the trembling occupants of the coach waited for the chief actors in the drama. The noise caused by General La Fayette and his supporters, who were returning with torches from a meeting, so terrified the little Dauphin that he hid himself under his governess's petticoats. At last the king, the queen, and Mme. Elisabeth appeared. Such was the king's coolness or, perhaps, his blindness to the danger which threatened the lives of his nearest and dearest that, while making his escape across the moonlit courtyard, he bent down to fasten his shoe-string, which had become loosened.

The hackney-coach then took the royal family to Mr. Quentin Craufurd's house in the rue de Clichy, where they expected to get into the coach which Mme. Sullivan had had prepared for them. However, on reaching his *hôtel*



Photo

MADAME ROYALE

Neudein

the party found that the carriage, in consequence of a misunderstanding, had gone to the Barrière Saint-Martin, where it was said to be waiting for them. But when the fugitives arrived at the Barrière, not a trace was to be seen of the roomy *berline*, with its four horses and its hampers of provisions, china, silver, and toilet-articles, which Mr. Craufurd had promised should take them from danger to safety. However, one of the party, having taken the trouble to pass through the barrier and walk a few paces along the high road, discovered the green-painted carriage, with its yellow wheels and green silk blinds, waiting, with its lamps still unlit, round a corner of the road. With what delight did the royal fugitives change from the rumbling hackney-coach into this magnificent travelling conveyance, too magnificent, indeed, for a mere baroness returning to the deserts of Russia !

It was now half-past two on the morning of June 21st. No sooner had the royal family seated themselves in this luxurious vehicle than they began to rehearse their rôles. Mme. la Baronne de Korff (Mme. de Tourzel) was travelling with her lady-companion, Rosalie (Mme. Elisabeth), her two daughters, Amélie and Aglaé (Madame Royale and the little Dauphin), the latter's governess, Mme. Rochet (Marie-Antoinette), and her steward Durand (Louis XVI.). The latter had taken but little pains to hide his very pronounced Bourbon features under a round hat, while he had thrown a bottle-green cloak, as the night was cool, over his brown coat. The ladies of the party wore grey and flowered silk dresses, and Marie-Antoinette wore a black hat and a little black silk mantle.

The party partook of some breakfast in the early morning, for Craufurd had provided all kinds of delicate viands, and had gone so far as to place several bottles of champagne in the rumble.

The king throughout the journey showed such a deplorable lack of common sense as to make it doubtful if he realised in what danger he was. It may be said that his inability to restrain his appetite caused the failure of his plans to escape ; for feeling hungry during the morning of that fatal day, he insisted upon stopping for some time at the house of one of his former servants, M. de Chamilly, where he satisfied his appetite at the cost of two precious hours. He frequently descended from the carriage and entered into conversation with the villagers while the horses were being changed or watered. While driving along the broad white road which France owes to his ancestors, the fugitive king would engage in conversation with the peasants concerning their crops.

It had been arranged that the royal family should be met at Châlons by a detachment of soldiers which the Marquis de Bouillé* had promised to provide. M. de Damas, another of the king's faithful servants, was to meet the travellers either at Clermont or at Sainte-Ménéhould with another detachment of soldiers.

Paris learnt at eight o'clock on the morning of the 21st that the royal family had slipped through the fingers of

* Bouillé, François Claude, Marquis de (1739-1800), governor of the Windward Islands during the American war. He took several islands from the English (1778), and on his return to France was given command of the *armée de Meuse, Sarre, et Moselle*. But his command was not considered sufficiently severe, and he was rightly suspected of having royalist tendencies, and was obliged to emigrate to Coblenz. Having settled in England, he wrote some memoirs of the Revolution, which were much read. He died in London in 1800.

their gaolers. The king had left a letter behind him at the Tuileries, in which he explained his reasons for leaving his good town of Paris, affirmed that he was virtually a prisoner in his palace, which palace was not suited for his occupation, complained that his civil list was not in proportion to his rank, and added that he had ceased to be master in his own house.

Meanwhile the fugitives were nearing Montmédy. The journey had not been accomplished without several mishaps ; the traces broke at Chaintrix and much valuable time was wasted in mending them ; twice the horses fell and the royal party had to get out of the vehicle and go some way on foot. There was a general feeling of uneasiness in the air. The day was one of those dull, sunless days in summer which seem all the duller for coming after a spell of fine, sunny weather.

Disappointment awaited the travellers at Châlons. The escort promised by Bouillé was nowhere to be seen. The king's repasts and the various accidents mentioned above had delayed the royal party, and Bouillé's division, after waiting for some time in vain for the appearance of the big lumbering vehicle, moved off.

However, Sainte-Ménéhould was reached at last ; here the travellers had to change horses again. The fact that they were getting farther and farther away from Paris probably prompted the king to be more than usually imprudent. While the horses were being changed, Louis XVI. frequently put his head out of the carriage window, and Marie-Antoinette, completely forgetting that she was merely a governess travelling with her mistress, Mme. de Korff, and the latter's two little girls, bowed

somewhat haughtily to the townsfolk who, on hearing the heavy vehicle rattling over the rough paving-stones of the little town, had hurried out of their houses to look at the travellers. Such a prominent part did Mme. de Korff's steward seem to play, that one of the lookers-on remarked :

“ 'Tis the Prince de Condé, who, after paying a visit incognito to Paris, is now returning to Germany.”

There was one among the crowd who, though he said nothing, thought much. As he moved off, after taking a long, searching glance into the *berline* with its green taffeta blind, he nodded his head at the so-called steward with his prominent eyes, aquiline nose, and spotted face, murmuring under his breath : “ *Louis Capet !* ”

Hurrying back to his house, this man, Drouet * by name, imparted his impressions to his wife. As he dared not assume the responsibility of arresting the royal fugitives without proper authority, he told his son to saddle a horse and hurry on to Varennes-en-Argonne, a village in the district of Verdun, and there give the alarm before the *berline* with its heavy load of luggage passed through on its way to Montmédy.

The royal party left Sainte-Ménéhould in ignorance that they had been recognised. On the way to Varennes the travellers, as ill-luck would have it, missed M. de Damas' detachment of hussars under the command of

* Drouet, Jean Baptiste (1763-1824). For arresting the royal family, this *incorruptible* refused the sum of 30,000 *francs* (£1,200) offered to him by the *Assemblée nationale*. He was afterwards nominated deputy to the *Convention*, where he distinguished himself by his violent language and ultra-revolutionary opinions. When commissioner to the *armée du Nord*, he was taken prisoner by the Austrians (1793), and two years later, by a strange irony of fate, was exchanged for Madame Royale, the very princess whom he had arrested with her parents at Varennes, in 1791.

MM. de Choiseul* and de Goguelat. The latter must have taken a different route, for when the travellers reached the outskirts of Varennes the soldiers were a quarter of a league behind them.

Drouet's son, who was still almost a child, managed by taking several short cuts to reach Varennes some minutes before the fugitives. Having warned the mayor that the royal family were trying to escape out of France, he and several young men armed themselves and waited for the carriage to appear. The first intimation received by the royal family that they were being pursued was when they found, on attempting to cross a bridge outside Varennes, that a heavy cart lay on its side in the road, barring their passage. Almost immediately afterwards a band of youths appeared and, pointing their guns at the occupants of the *berline*, ordered them to stop. A detachment of five national guards under the direction of the public prosecutor, a grocer named Sauce or Sausse, now hurried up and demanded to see the mysterious travellers' passports, whereupon an imperious voice cried from the interior of Mr. Craufurd's carriage :

" Be quick, for we are in a hurry ! "

The passports bore the name of Korff and seemed authentic.

The carriage was about to move on when a horse was

* Choiseul Stainville, Gabriel, Duc de (1760-1838), was nephew to the Minister Etienne François de Choiseul, and was educated by him. He was a colonel of dragoons at the time when he tried to effect the escape of the royal family. For this act he was arrested at Verdun. As the queen's *chevalier d'honneur* he stayed with his royal mistress until she entered the prison of the Temple. He was again arrested at Calais in 1795, as he was preparing to leave France, and was deported. He returned to his native land in 1801, and was called to the *chambre des Pairs* on the Restoration.

heard galloping in the distance As it came nearer the little group of fugitives and their captors heard a hoarse voice crying :

“ Stop ! stop ! ”

The rider was Drouet. As he leapt from the saddle he cried to the national guards :

“ I am convinced that these persons are the king and his family ; if you allow them to cross the frontier, you will be guilty of treason ! ”

Even now the inhabitants of Varennes hesitated to arrest the travellers. However, they thought it best, as Drouet seemed so certain of his facts, to make the occupants of the green *berline* descend and pass the night under the roof of the public prosecutor, the grocer Sauce.

When M. de Damas' hussars reached Varennes, they found that the alarm had been given to the whole countryside, and that the tocsin was being rung. As for the travellers, whose exit from France they had been charged to protect, they had been lodged in the humble house of the grocer. The first thing which Louis XVI. asked for on entering this shelter was a glass of water ; he seemed much more depressed than the queen, and repeatedly exclaimed :

“ What reception will Paris and the *Assemblée* accord me ? ”

Louis XVI. still had one loophole through which to escape, but he refused to use it—all honour to him. When M. de Choiseul (who on his arrival with his hussars at Varennes had been promptly arrested) was ushered into the presence of his king and tried to persuade him to let

him make a dash for liberty and massacre the national guards who had been instrumental in capturing the royal family, Louis XVI. replied :

“ Can you be sure that, in the struggle which is sure to ensue, a bullet may not wound the queen, or my son, or my daughter, or my sister ? ”

As M. de Choiseul could not answer for what might or might not happen, the king refused to allow him to make the attempt. It is a pity that Louis XVI. afterwards denied that he was trying to leave the kingdom when questioned as to his journey. Sauce was an honest man according to his light. For some reason, perhaps from a feeling of pity for his guests, or a faint hope that some mistake had been made, or dread of the blame which he might incur, he went to awaken a certain judge named Destez, who he knew had often seen the king at Versailles and could set all doubts at rest. With this worthy man Sauce hastened back to his shop ; together they climbed the humble wooden staircase leading to the room where the children of France, worn out with excitement and fatigue, lay asleep on the grocer's bed, while the king, the queen, Mme. Elisabeth and Mme. de Tourzel sat engrossed in their own melancholy reflections. Sauce pushed the door open. Destez gave one glance at the heavy form seated with bowed head on a cane chair and, realising the tragedy that was being enacted in that little room :

“ Sire ! ” he cried.

“ Yes,” replied Louis, equally moved, pushing back his chair and rising to greet his visitor : “ Yes, I am your king.”

With a gesture that did honour to sovereign and subject

alike, he embraced the man who had just identified him, the humble grocer whose hospitality he had accepted, and the soldiers who had come to take him back to his palace-prison.

He then gave his reasons for leaving Paris ; he had left the capital, he said, because his authority had become a thing of no account, because he and his family had been exposed to all sorts of indignities, and because he felt that he was no longer in safety among his people. . . .

The flight from Paris had been illumined by a gleam of hope ; the return to the capital was like a horrible nightmare. The Marquis de Dampierre, as the king was driving by his *château*, came out to salute his royal master ; the national guards drew back from the carriage as if to let the king and his servant exchange greetings, and then raised their muskets and shot the marquis “ as if he were a rabbit.” Having done this, they cut off his head, stuck it on the end of a bayonet and held it up, as the Princesse de Lamballe’s head was afterwards held up, in front of the horrified travellers, who did not dare to draw down the silk blinds.

At Châlons a poor priest begged to be allowed to address his king. On approaching the carriage the national guards were about to accord to him the same treatment which they had already dealt out to the unfortunate marquis, when Barnave,* who was soon to find himself in a similar

* Barnave, Pierre Joseph Marie (1761-1793), was already celebrated as a lawyer at Granville when the Revolution broke out. As deputy for Dauphiné at the *Tiers Etat* he obtained much success ; he was not afraid to show his sympathy for the king, whereby he became unpopular. Some correspondence having been discovered between him and the king at the Tuileries, he was arrested and imprisoned in his native town. After spending fifteen months in prison, he was brought up to Paris, tried, condemned, and executed.

position to that in which the king was now situated, cried :

“Tigers ! have you ceased to be Frenchmen ? A nation of heroes, would you become a tribe of murderers ?”

For once his words were heard and obeyed ; the priest was allowed to escape unhurt.

The following short note from Mme. Elisabeth to her friend *Rage*, written a few days after the royal family's return to Paris, shows that the princess's courage had not forsaken her :

“ June 29th, 1791.

“ I hope, *mon cœur*, that you are well and that your friend's position has not made you ill. Your friend is in excellent health ; as you know, her body seldom suffers with her soul. The latter is not calculated to satisfy its Creator ; by God's indulgence alone can she hope to find mercy. I neither wish nor am I able to enter into any details concerning things around me ; it suffices for you to know that I am well, that I am quite calm, that I love you with all my heart, and that I will soon write to you, *if I can*.”

What volumes are contained in those three words : *if I can !*

The Comte de Provence owed his escape to two friends, the Comte d'Avaray and the humble English servant Sayers. The Comte d'Avaray was unpopular with the Comte d'Artois, *Monsieur's* brother, because he spoke English, aped English manners, and professed indecently liberal opinions.

Monsieur, himself, had a strange character ; of his own self he said : “ We must look facts in the face ; the Comte d'Artois is an honest fellow, which I am not ! ”

" *Faux comme Monsieur !* " was the people's verdict.

At the beginning of the Revolution he had tried to win popularity by pretending to side with the rising party. When in 1787 the astute Calonne* got into trouble, *Monsieur* denied all participation in his late friend's ventures ; and again two years later, when the Marquis de Favras † was arrested as a counter-revolutionist, he hastened to the Hôtel de Ville to protest that he knew nothing of the marquis' plans, and swore that he was as good a citizen as anyone present. The fact that he pensioned Favras' widow when he took the title of Louis XVIII. seems to show that he felt that he owed some reparation to the dead.

The future King Louis XVIII. was certainly witty ; having received a good education in his youth, he had a decided taste for classics, and was much addicted to making Latin quotations. The Comte d'Avaray's one fault in the eyes of his royal master was that he did not understand Latin. It was said of *Monsieur* that " he meant very well " ; perhaps this is the highest praise we can give him. Marie de Noailles speaks of him thus : " He is as round as a barrel and very lazy." One of his own pages, the Comte d'Hézecques, even went farther, for he said :

* Calonne, Charles Alexandre de (1734-1802). This man, another of Marie-Antoinette's friends, never tried to influence her to limit her extravagance—on the contrary, as *contrôleur général des finances*, he was able by a loan to obtain further funds for her use. La Fayette, having in 1787 ordered Calonne to give an account of his administration, the king was obliged to dismiss him. After spending some years of exile in Lorraine and in England, he returned to France during the *consulat*.

† Favras, Thomas Mahi, Marquis de (1745-1790), lieutenant of *Monsieur's* Swiss guards, was accused in 1789 of plotting to assassinate Lafayette, Necker, and Bailly, and to put Louis XVI. at the head of an army of tried royalists. He was condemned to be hung, which sentence was executed February 19th, 1790.

"*Monsieur* has a nasty disposition. . . . Never did a prince have a more ungainly walk."

So little did Marie-Antoinette care for her brother-in-law and his wife that she seldom went to the Luxemburg, where the Comte and Comtesse de Provence lived a veritable "cat and dog life." In a letter written by Marie-Antoinette to the Princesse de Lamballe, the queen said of the Comte de Provence :

"I have not changed my opinion concerning the person I mentioned to you ; matters have not altered. Be sure, my dear Lamballe, that that heart contains more self-love than affection for his brother and certainly for me. He has regretted all his life that he is not master, and his determination to be mixed up in everything has only increased our trials, which unfortunately furnish him with an opportunity to push himself forward."

Monsieur was in bed on the night of June 20th, 1791, when the Comte d'Avaray entered his room and told him that the moment had come to fly. Aided by Sayers, who remained in *Monsieur's* service until death in 1804 released him from his duties, the Comte d'Avaray helped *Monsieur* to dress ; the three fugitives then got into a hackney-coach which the Comte d'Avaray had taken care to secure in advance, and which was stocked with provisions. The same presence of mind or blindness to danger which had marked the flight of Louis XVI. was shown by *Monsieur* ; the fugitive, having discovered that he had forgotten his cane and his snuff-box in his hurried departure, expressed his intention of returning to the Luxemburg palace to fetch them, whereupon the Comte d'Avaray lost his temper and swore at his prince and at all

other princes born and unborn. No sooner had the hackney-coach passed through the gates of Paris than *Monsieur*, who during the flight was known as the Comte de Lille, unable to curb his Bourbon appetite, began to partake freely of the good things with which the vehicle was filled, after which he burst forth into a rousing drinking-song. The Comte d'Avaray, who travelled as an Englishman returning to his native land with his two valets, had some difficulty in quieting his prince. The fugitives had one or two mishaps, such as broken wheels and traces, but they eventually reached Brussels, where, however, they did not remain very long, but went on to Aix-la-Chapelle ; here they found the Comte d'Artois and the King of Sweden, Gustavus III. *Monsieur*, on leaving his native land, had decided to assume the title of Regent. Before doing so, he asked the King of Sweden, his brother the Comte d'Artois, and the Bishop of Arras, who was also at Aix-la-Chapelle, their opinion upon the matter. Upon which Gustavus III. wrote the following manifesto to the European powers :

“ The fact that the King of France is in captivity having been proved to the whole of Europe, no one can question *Monsieur's* right to assume the title of Regent. It now only remains for us to consider when we ought to make *Monsieur's* intention public. It would seem as if the salvation of France depended upon two events, and as if *Monsieur* ought to be free to choose when to exercise his rights or to refrain from doing so. As people no longer seem to fear that the King of France, the queen, and their captive children may lose their lives, we can afford to choose a slower and surer plan. Had the king's life been in danger, we should have been obliged to sacrifice every-thing.

“ The most prudent line of conduct to adopt would be to remain passive, to do nothing, attempt nothing, and appear to leave matters to run their course in order to reassure the *Assemblée* and pacify the different parties, who are now being united by a common danger, and abandon them to their private quarrels, to their differences of opinion, to their secret ambitions, and above all to the difficulty and the ever-increasing disorder of the finances, of the metal currency and of the discontent of the people, who are obliged to pay the taxes without which no government can exist ; we could then afford to wait patiently for the destruction of the monstrous government now established in France. In this case it is certain that *Monsieur*, by taking the title of Regent, would only postpone the crisis ; some would dread his revenge ; others would endeavour to vent their spite upon him, and he would be held up to the people by the factionists as an enemy—which would only make matters worse. . . If we have to go to work more quickly ; we must accept the scheme which the princes appear to have adopted, viz. to form a league comprised of all the European princes by which they acknowledge that *Monsieur* ought to use his right to deliver the king his brother and regenerate his fatherland. Occasions sometimes arise when he who makes use of his rights, no matter how people may question them, wins respect and applause for his firmness which would not have been his if he had listened to other people’s advice. And such is the present case. . . Besides, the title of Regent would save *Monsieur* and all loyal Frenchmen from the imputation of rebellion which the *Assemblée* would not fail to cast in their face. They would not be Frenchmen fighting against France, but loyal subjects attacking rebels in order to release their imprisoned sovereign. . . *Monsieur*, by appearing absolutely sure of his rights, would need no other promulgation than a letter written to all the European sovereigns in the same terms which the Duc d’Orleans used as Regent, in order to avoid any disputes concerning the question of etiquette. *Monsieur* would announce the fact that the king was a

prisoner, would publish the princes' manifesto and expose the crimes of the factionists ; he would add that he had assumed the Regency by right of birth. *Monsieur* would then speak with that feeling, that courage, and that eloquence for which he is so well known, of the interests of the crowned heads, and of what he expected them to do by acquainting them of the fact that he intended to protest against any deeds the king might be forced to countenance . . . From what we have here said it is easy to conclude that *Monsieur* ought not to hesitate to force the government to act, that he ought to prevent the foreign princes entering into negotiations with, or recognising the *Assemblée*, and that he ought to gather round him all that remains of the public forces.

“ Such are the reflections prompted by my knowledge of business, by my interest in, and my friendship for the brothers of the King of France, who have always displayed confidence in me.”

The above manifesto was written by a king whose reign was marked by such valuable reforms as the abolition of torture in his kingdom, and the admission of peasantry and *bourgeoisie* to equal rights with the nobility. When, in 1792, he offered his services to the foreign principalities as *generalissimo*, the dagger of Ankerström prevented that offer being accepted.

On July 7th *Monsieur* and his brother, the Comte d'Artois, arrived at Schönbornlust, near Coblenz, where the Elector of Trèves had placed a palace at their disposal. Here the two princes found their mistresses waiting for them ; for although the royal *émigrés* forgot to take such unimportant articles as canes and snuff-boxes on their journey, they did not omit to take their little failings with them.

The Comtesse de Provence did not accompany her



Photo

THE COUNT D'ARTOIS, AFTERWARDS CHARLES X

Neurdein

husband on his journey. It was of this much-trying lady that the Empress Marie-Thérèse said that she had "a truly Italian character," which is not astonishing, for Marie-Josephine-Louise of Savoy was born in Turin, September 2nd, 1753. She married the Comte de Provence at the age of eighteen. Years after, the Princesse Louise de Condé, in writing of her death, which happened November 15th, 1810, said: "*Her courage was beyond all expression; while we wept abundantly, not a tear moistened her eyes until she heaved her last sigh. . . . This unhappy queen was more illustrious in death than she ever was during her lifetime.*"

Alone, deserted by the man who should have protected her, the Comtesse de Provence was rescued from certain death by her favourite, Mme. de Gourbillon, whose husband was director of the Lille post-office. It was said that this lady was clever and not above intriguing, but she was heart and soul devoted to her royal mistress. Small wonder that the neglected countess showered favours and affection upon the woman who helped her to escape the horrible death which would have been hers if she had had no better friend than her husband to help her.

Mme. de Gourbillon made all the necessary arrangements for the countess's flight, for which she suffered the following penalty: she forfeited her entire fortune, and she and her husband were both declared *émigrés*. Her reward is contained in the following letter from *Monsieur* to his wife:

"I was quite sure that Mme. de Gourbillon's zeal and intelligence would be sufficient to help you out of your troubles. . . Stay at Namur."

This last sentence tells a tale : for Mme. de Balbi, once the Comtesse de Provence's lady of the Bed-chamber, who had already caused her former mistress to endure many a painful hour, was sharing the Comte de Provence's exile.

The Comtesse de Provence had already been blamed by Louis XVI. for her complaisance in allowing her husband to pay attention to her pretty lady of the Bed-chamber, whose husband, a Genoese patrician, had gone mad and was shut up in a lunatic asylum at Senlis. But it is more than probable that she was obliged to submit and endure this, as well as other humiliations. .

On emigrating in 1789, Mme. de Balbi opened a lengthy correspondence with *Monsieur*, notwithstanding the fact that she was suspected of having begun a *liaison* with M. de Jaucourt, whose sister, the Comtesse du Cayla* (who was afterwards to oust her out of her position as chief favourite), she later made the unlucky Comtesse de Provence engage as her lady-companion.

The "Queens of the Emigration," as they have been called, Mesdames de Balbi and de Polastron, the mistresses of the Comtes de Provence and d'Artois, ruled over the court of Schönbornlust, for the latter had allowed his wife to go to Turin, where she was out of the way. Much sentiment has lately been wasted by a modern author over Mme. de Polastron and her *liaison* with the Comte d'Artois. The two rival queens, whose ambition was identical, although they chose different ways of obtaining their

* Zoé Talon, Mme. du Cayla (1784-1850), obtained great influence over Louis XVIII. in his old age, and persuaded him to give her the *château* of Saint-Omer. She used her power over the king in order to favour the cause of M. de Villèle and to combat the influence of the Duc de Richelieu.

desire, hated each other cordially. Mme. de Balbi had no pretensions to beauty, but she was witty, a keen politician, and she delighted in filling her *salon* with *Monsieur's* courtiers, of whom the Comte d'Avaray, notwithstanding his lamentable lack of Latin, was the favourite.

When the Comtesse de Provence was eventually permitted to join her husband at Schönbornlust, she found that nothing had been altered, and that, as in the old days of the Luxemburg palace, she had to take a second place.

To M. ^{ne uilly : primary source} Fonneron we owe the following charming picture of the court of *Monsieur*, where similar scenes to those which had led to the Emigration were enacted :

“ Mme. de Balbi's *salon* was open every evening to those gentlemen who attended *Monsieur's* levees. The right wing of the palace of Schönbornlust was shared by the Comtesse de Provence, the Comte d'Artois, and Mme. de Balbi, while the left wing was inhabited by the Comte de Provence alone. . . . This young woman (Mme. de Balbi) changed her costume in public, her hair was dressed before a little table ; she changed her chemise in the presence of the assembled courtiers. The Comte de Provence neither seemed jealous nor embarrassed ; he sat in an arm-chair in front of the fire with his back turned to the company, his hand resting on the knob of his cane ; he had a trick of thrusting the end of his cane into his shoe. The conversation was very animated throughout Mme. de Balbi's toilet. The prince either made puns or composed rhymes ; the toilet-table having been removed, everybody gathered round the favourite. . . . ”

The troubles of the Comtesse de Provence were increased by her ill-health ; but neither her uncertain temper nor her narrow views could estrange her from Mme. de Gourbillon, who was the only person who had

any influence over her. Her position at Schönbornlust must have been extremely painful to her. Quarrels between the different royal *émigrés* were almost a daily occurrence ; as for those virtuous ladies, the " Queens of the Emigration," Mme. de Balbi spent her time giving card and supper parties as she had done in the old days of the Luxemburg, while Mme. de Polastron enjoyed herself in her own way by criticising the behaviour of the rival " Queen." And there was yet a third irregular *ménage*, that of the Prince de Condé and the Princesse de Monaco, who, although she was always preaching to her fellow *émigrés*, took no pains to hide her relations with the would-be saviour of Louis XVI.

A propos of the Prince de Condé, the king, on July 7th, 1791, had written a letter to the *Assemblée* which had better been left unwritten, for it only contained a confession of his own weakness :

" MESSIEURS,

" I hear that several French officers now sojourning in foreign lands have lately attempted, by sending a series of letters, to persuade the soldiers of the regiments to which they themselves formerly belonged to leave the kingdom and join them ; that in order to entice them they have, by virtue of direct or indirect authority from me, promised them rewards and promotion. I think it my duty to contradict such an assertion and to repeat what I have already said, that my intention, on leaving Paris, was to go to Montmédy, from which place I myself intended to write to the *Assemblée nationale* what I considered necessary concerning the difficulties presented by the execution of the new laws and the government of the kingdom. I hereby declare that anybody who asserts that he is authorised to act in the matter is a criminal impostor.

" LOUIS."

THE KING AND HIS BROTHERS 95

It is a clumsy letter, as anybody familiar with the history of the Revolution can see. It was difficult to make anyone believe that he sought Montmédy as a shelter from his own people. They could not but be suspicious that his real object had been to leave his kingdom at all costs. It seems as if this sovereign only roused himself from his habitual indolence to commit some blunder worse in its effects even than the indolence.

It was a very different letter that he wrote only a month later to his brothers, Provence and d'Artois ; it shows him at his best.

" Force can only be employed by the foreign armies, and this should only be done as a last resource. How can a king allow his States to be invaded ? Is not the cure worse than the disease ? . . . You cannot imagine how your conduct has pained me ; I was already sufficiently pained on hearing that the Comte d'Artois had attended the conference of Pillnitz without my consent. . . . Could anybody have believed that my brothers would have disobeyed my commands ? And so you are going to show me to the nation accepting the constitution with one hand while I invite the foreign powers to help me with the other ! What honourable man would approve of such conduct ? . . . I can quite understand that my trials, my sorrows and my embarrassment count for nothing in your estimation, but you ought to spare me the pain of suffering through your conduct, because such suffering would be more grievous to me than any other. . . . "

Little did the king's brothers heed his prayers.

It would almost seem from a letter written by Mme. Elisabeth to Mme. de Raigecourt, August 23rd, 1791, as

* The treaty of Pillnitz, by which the Emperor of Germany and the King of Prussia had promised, at the request of the Comte d'Artois, to restore to Louis XVI. all his lost power, was signed August 27th, 1791.

if the royal family still cherished hopes that they might be able to escape from France. The letter also bears witness to the consolation which the princess had found in the friendship of the Abbé Edgeworth.

“ . . . I am still very pleased with my new acquaintance,” she writes ; “ and if I do not make any progress I shall know who is to blame. I have just had a long conversation with the Abbé : wit, kindness, gentleness without weakness, a profound knowledge of human nature, an engaging manner which invites confidence, a very lovable disposition which makes one long to imitate him—such is his portrait, roughly drawn, it is true, but which, added to what I have already told you concerning him, will enable you to imagine the rest. I cannot look forward without a pang to the day when I must leave him ; but I hope that Providence, who has never abandoned me, will temper the wind to the shorn lamb. You will tell me that I go to meet my troubles half-way, but I fancy that I am here for some time—at least, according to what you yourself have told me. . . .”

Two days later, Mme. Elisabeth wrote to Mme. de Bombelles, who was in hiding at Rorschach in Switzerland, having taken the name of Mme. de Schwarzenwald to escape from her persecutors :

“ I would gladly write amusing letters, so that they might read like an interesting diary ; but I fear that I lack the talent to do so. However, I will first tell you to amuse you that two days ago, some chestnuts having fallen upon the head of a sentinel walking on the Terrasse des Feuillants, the fellow thought that somebody was throwing stones at him, so he fired his gun ; this noise made the corporal hasten up. He climbed on to the top of the wall, when he saw two men strolling in the courtyard of the Feuillants, whereupon he fired at them. Luckily they were not wounded. They belonged to the guard. You

can imagine that this incident caused considerable excitement. Last night a sentinel who was keeping guard in an upper corridor in the palace fell asleep ; he must have had nightmare, for he woke up screaming. At the same moment all the sentinels began to scream. A similar panic seized the guards in the gardens. All these incidents keep the guards in a state of terror apparently very pleasant to those who are the cause of that terror.

“ The king’s military household was dismissed yesterday. He is to have 1,200 foot-guards and 6,000 horse-guards who will be chosen from among the troops of the line and the national guards. In order to be chosen, the men must have served one year in the national guards. He will also have a guard of honour. You will agree with me that the king will be well and properly guarded. M. le Duc d’Orléans renounced his rights to the throne during yesterday’s *séance*. This news, *ma Bombe*, is all my country can produce. The king’s birthday passed off most quietly ; it was treated as an ordinary day. He was not even allowed to hear mass in the chapel. . . . ”

The last few months had quite broken down the barrier of resentment which had hitherto separated Marie-Antoinette from her sister-in-law. In September the queen wrote to the Duchesse Jules de Polignac :

“ I have just been to the Bois de Boulogne with Elisabeth : if she were not so kind, and if she, with her angelic sweetness of disposition, did not know so well how to dispel the dark visions which haunt us, I should look upon these walks, when the common people run after us calling us names or make a point of pulling their hats down over their eyes instead of bowing to us, as a species of torture. My health is fairly good in spite of all my afflictions. My children are very well. My son seems to understand my sorrows ; he has changed much lately—to his advantage, I am glad to say. He is no longer passionate ; he has become quite docile ; he displays confidence in his masters when learning his book and he is anxious

to please me. . . . As for my daughter, she is an angel of consolation."

The month of September saw the signing of the constitution of 1791, by which the king was deprived of many of the rights which his ancestors had exercised with such disastrous results to the nation ; in future the law, not the king, was to be all-powerful.

CHAPTER VI

The Abbé laments the trials of the Church in France : Mme. Elisabeth still hopes for better days : The Comtesses de Provence and D'Artois are sent to Turin : Mme. de Balbi in disgrace : Death of Leopold II. of Germany : The guillotine makes its *début* : Germany declares war against the Republic : The king dismisses the Girondins : The *Baiser Lamourette* : The Tuileries are invaded : The royal family are imprisoned in the Temple : The massacres of September : The Abbé's house is attacked, and he is forced to hide : The royal family in prison.

OWING to the departure of so many of his fellow-priests, the Abbé Edgeworth had lately found his hands very full. The following letter to Dr. Moylan tells how he had occupied himself since last writing to his old friend :

“ Paris. *September 20th, 1791.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAR FRIEND,

“ I am quite sure that you will forgive my long silence, when you remember in what a position we have been since last Easter. All the churches are closed, and a considerable number of our clergy are obliged to flee ; those who remain are forced to exercise their holy profession in secret. This fact alone, without mentioning our other trials, will show you what a fatiguing life we are obliged to lead in a town as big as this, where the distances are so great. Work which used to take two hours, now occupies the whole day. So forgive me, my dearest friend, and rest assured that I do not forget you in the midst of my manifold occupations. Secular and religious

matters are going from bad to worse. The king has accepted the constitution ; and although the fact that he had his hands tied makes this acceptance void, it has caused much pain to the clergy and the nobility, his last remaining supporters. The former have determined to endure with Christian resignation the severe trials with which they are threatened ; for whereas the late government was inclined to be tolerant and peace-loving, we have every cause to fear that the new will do a great deal of harm, because it is composed of many more deists and persons chosen from among the lowest class of citizens, who are all too seldom governed by honourable and generous motives. As for the nobility, they have quite decided either to re-establish the monarchy, or to perish. They are leaving in crowds every day to join the king's brothers, and it is thought that they will soon number 25,000 or 30,000 men. All these persons, both officers and common soldiers, distinguished by birth or valour, wish to re-establish the king on his throne. But alas ! what obstacles lie in their path ! and even supposing they meet with no disasters, what a time they will have to wait before they can carry out their plans ; for, notwithstanding the exaggerated optimism of many people here, I cannot believe that anything will be done before next spring. So we have a cruel winter before us ; and meanwhile what battles we shall have to fight for the few members of the Christian Church now in this unhappy kingdom ! Our house is still in existence, but it will probably share the fate of other similar establishments in a few days. The *Comité's* plans have lately been published : Saint-Sulpice, Saint-Lazare, Saint-Nicolas, the Missions étrangères—in short, all the communities in France are to be suppressed. This subject was not discussed in public ; but as the *Comité's* scheme has been printed by order of the Chamber, people think that it is sure to be discussed and decreed before the present government separates, which, in all probability, will take place in a week or two.

“ This, Monseigneur, is a brief account of our present

position, and of our hopes for the future. I have only once seen such articles as you desire me to purchase, and they were not complete. All the silver and copper candlesticks are taken to the Mint to be melted down and converted into specie : there is an enormous quantity of the former. Not only are the candelabras carried off and desecrated by common hands, but the chalices, the pyxes, etc., suffer the same fate. But what is quite incomprehensible, unless we suppose that it is God's curse upon the nation, is that notwithstanding the immense quantity of silver melted down every day at the Mint, *écus* of six *livres* are extremely rare ; everything disappears I know not where ; the only money in circulation is in bank-notes, upon which one loses 17 or 20 per cent. What a state of affairs !

“ My mother and sister send their respects to you and your family. I remain, ever your devoted

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

The year 1791 was drawing to a close ; neither the *émigrés* nor their powerful hosts, the different European princes, had done anything towards succouring the royal family beyond talking, quarrelling, and discussing ways and means.

In a sad little letter to her friend, *Rage*, Mme. Elisabeth says :

“ Do you think that our troubles will finish with the year ? They say that R——* is against peace. He † is so infatuated with his own glory, and the foreign powers treat him with so much consideration that I do not think that R—— can do anything in the matter. The *Assemblée* is much embarrassed : it cannot retrace its steps, because, if it did so, the Republican party would get the upper hand ; in short we resemble the Tower of Babel in a most astonishing manner. Unfortunately, religion suffers there-

* R—— stood for Russia.

† The Comte d'Artois.

by. As for me, I ought to do penance ; but, notwithstanding the six days which I passed in retreat, I feel still very cross. Perhaps the shock received at Varennes will have proved useless, but it has been a good lesson to my soul. I have great need of resignation. . . . The life we are now leading does not alter much. We attend mass at mid-day ; we dine at half-past one. I go up into my room at six o'clock, and at seven my ladies appear. We sup at half-past nine. Billiards are played after dinner and supper that the king may have sufficient exercise. Everybody goes to bed at eleven o'clock ; we begin all over again on the morrow. Sometimes when it is warm and fine I regret my poor Montreuil. Perhaps we shall meet again some day ; how glad I should be ! But everything shows me that that day is very far away. . . ."

Never again was Mme. Elisabeth to see Montreuil, with its charming gardens and coppices. Never again would she stroll up and down the box-edged, moss-grown paths, picking her flowers, marvelling at the miracles which a warm spring day can accomplish, and thanking the Giver of all good things for what He had given and withheld from her.

The year 1792 dawned somewhat brighter than the previous year : the *Assemblée constituante*, after accomplishing many much-needed reforms, had given place to the *Assemblée législative*, which body contained such true patriots and eloquent orators as Vergniaud,* Pétion,† Camille Desmoulins,‡ so celebrated for his writings, and the hero of the charming idyl which united him to his

* Vergniaud, a lawyer at Bordeaux (b. 1753), was one of the most distinguished of the Girondins ; he perished on the scaffold in 1793.

† Pétion, Jérôme, mayor of Paris in 1791, was prescribed with the Girondins (1793), and perished near Bordeaux, devoured by wolves.

‡ Desmoulins, Camille (1762-1794), first a lawyer, then a member of the *Convention*, was one of the men who helped to overthrow the Bastille ; he died on the scaffold with Danton.



Photo

THE COUNTESS D'ARTOIS

Neurdein



beloved Lucile ; Guadet, * Gensonné † and Danton, ‡ who tried in vain to prevent the Revolution degenerating into a Reign of Terror.

The king's brothers continued to lead the life of indolence which had been theirs for some months. Las Cases in a letter to the Comte d'Antraigues, dated February 27th, 1792, refers to the daily quarrels which alone prevented some of the *émigrés* dying of *ennui*.

"The women are the cause of all the trouble, and I fear that we shall come to a very bad end. Neither the court of Louis XV. nor that of Louis XVI. ever saw so many quarrels or so many intrigues : there is nothing to be done as long as a single petticoat remains here."

At length even the Comte de Provence felt constrained to do something, so he packed off two of the petticoats—the most inoffensive, of course—to Turin. There the Comtesse de Provence and her sister-in-law, two despised and neglected wives, were to endeavour to keep up appearances on small allowances while their husbands lived in plenty with their mistresses.

Mme. de Balbi went too. She had offended her royal master, and was for the time being under a cloud, so she found that her health required attention.

Paris was in a strange state ; yet the royal family in their prison of the Tuileries, which they were soon to exchange for the Temple, knew nothing of what was happening, and still gazed towards the eastern frontier of France hoping for the help which never came.

* Guadet, one of the Girondins' most eloquent orators ; executed 1794.

† Gensonné, Armand (1758-1793), organised the Girondin party with Vergniaud and Guadet.

‡ Danton, founder of the Club des Cordeliers in Paris ; was guillotined 1794:

The Abbé Edgeworth wrote very few letters during these weary months, when the royal family were waiting for they knew not what. Indeed, there are only two letters from the Abbé bearing the date 1792. The first was written immediately after the death of Leopold II., Emperor of Germany, another of Marie-Antoinette's brothers. Only the year before Leopold had urged his weak-willed brother-in-law to accept the constitution, and had subsequently expressed his satisfaction on hearing that he had signed this important document, thus granting the desire of so many of his subjects. He was a liberal at heart, and possessed many of the valuable qualities for which his predecessor had been distinguished. It must have been somewhat against his will that, at the conference at Pillnitz, August 27th, 1791, he bound himself to support the King of Prussia in his efforts to restore to Louis XVI. his former power. But Leopold was very loath to attack his brother-in-law's kingdom, and he expressed his repugnance in the following words: "I have a sister in France, but France is not my sister!" Like his brother Joseph, he was hated by the Jesuits, whose intricate morality he could not appreciate. The *émigrés* stood very low in his estimation, and he was not above sneering at the sentimental immorality of the Artois-Polastron *ménage*.

So scarce did the Abbé's letters become during these months of suspense that Dr. Moylan wrote chiding his friend, to which unmerited blame the Abbé replied as follows :

“ Paris. *March 21st, 1792.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND EVER DEAREST FRIEND,

“ I have indeed become a bad correspondent ; but our endless troubles and our ever-increasing trials will, I hope, be my excuse.

“ We little thought a year ago that we should to-day be as far away from peace and harmony as at the beginning of our troubles ; every month was to see the end, and to bring us the succour promised by our four powerful neighbours who are as interested in our discussions as we are ourselves. Each week has brought a fresh disappointment. Letters from abroad have kept up our spirits, notwithstanding the iron yoke under which we groan, and from which no help from abroad is now able to deliver us. The death of the emperor coming at such an inopportune moment weakens our hopes, and will probably delay the hour of liberation. However, I cannot think that this event will influence the sovereign's policy in any way ; and no matter what opinions the new King of Bohemia may profess, I consider him in honour bound to fulfil his father's promises ; besides, his own interests are at stake ; for, supposing he is fired with the ardent zeal of the catechumen, he cannot hope to enjoy peace in his own States if the spirit of insubordination, which is now turning France upside down, is not completely stamped out.

“ Meanwhile it is impossible to describe the state of anarchy into which this unhappy country has fallen : every province, every town, every village is a little republic to itself which no longer obeys the king's commands, unless they happen to suit its own private interests or fancies. Those priests who refuse to take the oath are sometimes banished and sometimes cast into prison, which proceeding is contrary to the decree of the *Assemblée nationale*. At the present moment the town of Arles is being besieged by a large body of *Marseillais*, whom the Protestants of the neighbouring towns have joined ; in Toulouse, Lyons, etc., all the churches have been closed, so that the faithful are forced to worship in constitutional parishes. In short, God alone can put a stop to the

anarchy which reigns in every province of this unhappy kingdom, and restore to it its former splendour. Can you believe that, in the midst of all this confusion, peace and tranquillity reign in Paris? The constitutional churches are deserted; on Ash Wednesday there were twenty-two persons, men and women, at Saint-Sulpice. The members of the new clergy are only summoned to officiate at burials, marriages, and other ceremonies at which their presence is legally necessary. All other ceremonies are conducted by members of the old clergy, but in secret—except the mass, which they say publicly in all the remaining convents, a liberty against which the patriots protest loudly. We owe this indulgence to the spirit of philosophy which reigns in the *département* of Paris; but in all probability the same spirit will soon introduce other regulations less agreeable to the Catholics, that is to say: the suppression of the still existing secular confraternities; this decree will probably be issued the day after to-morrow, and doubtless they will soon decree that the ecclesiastical dress is not to be worn any longer. Pray for us, for verily we have great need of your prayers. My mother and my sister are well, and send you their respectful compliments; I will not speak of mine, for you know my feelings, and of a surety they can never alter.

“P.S.—I have just been informed that the *Marseillais*, having found some difficulty in obtaining recruits, have not yet besieged Arles.”

The twenty-fifth day of April, 1792, is a remarkable date in the history of the Revolution, for on that day the guillotine made its *début* in France. The work of a humane Frenchman, Dr. Antoine Louis, and of a humble mechanic named Schmidt, this machine, originally devised in order to spare unnecessary suffering to criminals condemned to suffer capital punishment, was, at the proposal of another humane member of society, M. Guillotin* by name,

* Guillotin, Joseph Ignace (1738-1814), deputy at the *Etats Généraux*.

adopted by the *Assemblée nationale* as a painless and speedy method of emptying the prisons of the capital. At first its victims were few and far between. On the occasion of one of its first appearances in Paris, nine returned *émigrés*, who had been caught with weapons in their possession, were decapitated on the Place de Grève. This had been a favourite place of execution since that fair Whitsunday in 1310 when, in order to celebrate the holy day in a fitting manner, Philippe le Bel had a monk who had been convicted of heresy, a woman accused of the same crime, and a converted Jew, who had imprudently returned to the faith of his fathers, led out under the blue vault of heaven and burnt alive. The guillotine's victims were not always two-legged; a dog, probably the pet of some *ci-devant aristocrate*, having had the impudence to bite a drummer belonging to the national guards in the leg, was arrested, tried, condemned and guillotined on the Barrière du Trône. A popular expression in those days was: "He is going to put his head through the cat-trap," or: "He is going to make Robespierre's she-ass drunk," as people nowadays say: "He is one of the 'widow's' victims."

M. Guillotin was more lucky than some of his colleagues of the *Assemblée nationale*, for he did not fall a victim to his *protégé*, although the Revolution, like an ungrateful child, devoured some of her most worthy creators.

The new Emperor of Germany declared war against France in this same month of April, a step which came too late, and only hastened the fatal *dénouement*. Volunteers flocked to offer their lives in defence of their fatherland

in its hour of danger ; but at first success was denied to the young republicans.

The Comte de Provence showed that he was still a Frenchman at heart when, on hearing that the republican forces had fled before the enemy on one occasion, he cried : " I am cut to the heart, for I cannot but remember that Frenchmen have been beaten, and have fled." The Duc d'Enghien, more nobly formed in mind and body, on learning of the first victories won by the republican troops, exclaimed : " The only troops who can rival the French royalists are the French republicans." Another *émigré*, blessed with an equally generous mind, speaking of a battle between republicans and German troops, said : " The enemy were French, which means that they did not flinch." At Bâle, Condé's soldiers fraternised with the republican troops, ate, drank, and strolled about the streets of the old town arm-in-arm.

The king had accepted the constitution, though much against his will, but he could not grasp the fact that he was no longer all-powerful. When, in June, 1792, he imprudently dismissed the Girondins, he drew down upon his head the fury of the populace, and on June 20th the brewer Santerre, at the head of a mob of infuriated Parisians, broke into the Tuileries and ordered the king to recall them.

July 7th saw a strange scene enacted at a meeting of the *Assemblée législative*. The Abbé Adrien Lamourette, Vicar-General of Arras in 1789, constitutional Bishop of Lyons from 1792 to 1794, had been appointed deputy in recognition of his talents and virtues as a member of the Church. In an inspired appeal to his fellow-deputies

he endeavoured to induce all parties to work together for the common good of the nation ; so deeply did his words touch his hearers, that the deputies embraced each other and swore to be more united in future : this act of reconciliation was known by the name of the *Baiser Lamourette*.* The peace was not of long duration.

On August 10th the Tuileries were invaded for the second time. The king, to save whose life so many brave Swiss were sacrificed, was forced to take refuge with his family in the hall of the *Assemblée*, whence he was led a prisoner to the Temple.

A few days later the *Assemblée législative* gave place to the *Convention*, which almost immediately became the scene of numerous disorders. Many of its members had been educated in monasteries, and not a few had taken Holy Orders ; some of these were loud in their condemnation of the clergy who had refused to take the oath of fealty to the new constitution. Indeed, Lecomte, on beholding the eagerness of some of his colleagues to deny their former faith, exclaimed :

“ *C'est donc à qui se déprêtriser !* ” which may be roughly translated : “ It's a race to see which of you shall be the first to unfrock himself ! ”

The massacres of September signalled the dawn of the *Convention*, termed by Mme. Roland “ an assembly of cowards.” The Abbé Grégoire went still farther when he said : “ It contains two or three hundred scoundrels, and is chiefly composed of cowards.” No one could accuse the Abbé Grégoire of belonging to the latter category.

* The Abbé Lamourette had returned to Lyons when that town was taken by the troops of the *Convention*. Condemned by the *tribunal révolutionnaire*, this excellent man perished a victim to his ideals.

At first the humble *curé* of Emberménil, in the diocese of Metz, he had been elected deputy at the *Etats Généraux* in 1789, when he had used his influence to unite the three orders, had presided at the famous scene of July 14th, 1789, and had voted for the abolition of all privileges. He took the oath of fealty to the constitution, and was elected Bishop of Blois. As the author of several works in favour of liberty, of religious tolerance, and of freedom for the Jews, he had earned the respect of his fellow-deputies. It was he who dared to inform the *Assemblée* that he had heard a rumour that the Archbishop of Paris, during the previous winter, had endeavoured to bribe a miller in the environs of the capital not to grind any more corn, in the hope that hunger would reduce the Parisians to submission. This may be classed with a similar rumour in which the queen's name had been mentioned two or three years before this incident.

The victims of the September massacres numbered nearly one thousand in Paris alone. Many clergy were included. The prison of Les Carmes, an old convent, was one of the first visited, and here one hundred and fourteen members of the clergy, including three bishops and two archbishops, one of whom was the father-confessor of the king's aunt, Mme. Victoire, and three brothers, all priests, of the name of Pazery de Thorame, were cut down as they tried to escape into the convent garden. The prison of Saint-Firmin, containing seventy-six priests, and the Abbaye with twenty-six monks, were also visited with similar results.

Among the few prisoners who escaped massacre were the little Pauline de Tourzel (later the Comtesse de Béarn)

and her mother, the governess of the children of France, who were thrown into prison. With a refinement of cruelty difficult to conceive in such a child-loving nation as the French, the little girl was placed in a cell by herself. Here she cried and sobbed so incessantly, and begged in such heart-rending tones "to be taken to her mama," that the kind-hearted gaoler made his big dog lie down beside the desolate little girl, saying: "I am going to leave you my dog as a companion; but whatever you do, don't say that I did so. I shall pretend to have forgotten him!" and he went off trembling for his own safety, but thankful to hear the child's sobs grow fainter and die away in the thick coat of the four-footed comforter. It was probably this good fellow who helped Hardy, a member of the *Commune*, and Manuel, * public prosecutor to the *Commune*, to get the child out of prison. She was afterwards taken by Manuel to the house of Mme. Carnot, the sister-in-law of the future *Directeur*, who treated her with every kindness.

The Abbé Edgeworth was not unmolested during those terrible days.

Already in the previous month his house in the rue de Bac had been attacked during the night by a band of armed men. The Abbé was fast asleep at the time of the attack, and, as his room was situated at the back of

* Manuel, Pierre Louis (1751-1793), was himself familiar with prison fare, for he had already been imprisoned in the Bastille for having written a pamphlet in which he ridiculed the French clergy. He made himself unpopular owing to his efforts to stop the September massacres. As a member of the *Convention*, he demanded that Louis XVI. should be imprisoned and deprived of his power. During the king's trial, Manuel declared that the nation had the right to pronounce his punishment. Nevertheless, when sentence of death was passed upon the unfortunate king, Manuel gave in his resignation. He, like many another republican, paid dearly for his independent spirit; he perished by the guillotine, November 14th, 1793.

the building, the intruders had entered the house before he was aware of what was happening. He was awakened by the noise of many feet hurrying up the staircase leading to his room. Then he heard doors being broken open and furniture being overturned. Thinking that his last hour had come, he determined not to be massacred in his bed, but to die like a brave man. Breathing a hasty prayer to his Creator, he sprang out of bed, threw a cloak round his shoulders, and opened his door. He saw several men armed and carrying torches. Noticing that one of the midnight intruders seemed of a superior class, he turned to him and asked him what he wanted. After looking at the Abbé very intently for a few moments, the leader said :

“ You are not the person we are looking for,” and added that he need have no fear, and that they did not wish to hurt him.

Somewhat reassured, the Abbé was about to retire, when the leader pushed him aside and forced his way into his room, mumbling something to the effect that he wanted to examine his papers.

The Abbé had lately been of immense service to the royal family in conveying letters to and from their friends abroad, and happened to have in his possession that night some particularly important documents which, were they to be found, would cost him his head. One of these documents was a letter written by an agent of the Comte de Provence and contained some vital secrets. Whatever were his feelings on hearing the leader express himself thus, the Abbé realised that the only thing to be done was to appear to acquiesce. With trembling hands and beating

heart he unlocked boxes and drawers and showed the inquisitor his different papers, which were so numerous that several hours would have been required to examine them thoroughly. The most compromising he tried to hide under letters written in English, and therefore incomprehensible to his visitors. Having found nothing which looked suspicious to his not very intelligent eyes, the leader, before leaving the house, went into another room, occupied by one of the Abbé's friends. Here, unfortunately, he discovered a letter from Germany which he considered suspicious, and the unhappy young man was promptly marched off to prison, where, in the following month, he fell a victim to the *septembriseurs*.

This incident so terrified the Abbé that he determined to destroy all the important documents which had been entrusted to his care, and which he knew that he was entitled to destroy if it should become necessary. For two whole days he sat in his room tearing up and burning whatever he thought might compromise the royal family. Hardly was this task accomplished when he received another visit from the revolutionists; this time they numbered a hundred and were more methodical in their search. They began about midday and went on until three o'clock in the morning, but they searched in vain. The Abbé was afterwards horrified to find that he had neglected to destroy the letter of the Comte de Provence's agent, and this document was actually handled by the men who had been commissioned to search his papers; but, as good luck would have it, they did not come upon the letter until they were near the end of their task, and,

tired and anxious to get home, they only gave a glance at the paper and then threw it aside as unimportant.

But the Abbé's troubles were not yet over. The tocsin gave the signal for the massacres of September. On hearing the sinister sound, the Abbé sent a faithful servant belonging to the community to find out what was happening. The messenger returned half dead with terror; in a few broken phrases he informed his listeners that a band of ruffians had invaded the prison of Saint-Sulpice and had massacred all the prisoners. Somebody had also told him that the mob meant to visit the Séminaire des Missions étrangères as soon as it had emptied one or two other prisons. The Abbé and his companions saw that they had no choice but to flee. Having disguised himself to the best of his ability, the Abbé slipped out of the house and, by choosing unfrequented streets, managed to reach the convent where his mother and his sister were living in comparative peace. Here, owing to a rumour that he had enlisted in the national guards and in this disguise penetrated daily into the Temple, he held communication with his royal friends and lived undisturbed for several weeks.

Whilst the Abbé lay in hiding in his mother's retreat the royal family was closely confined in the Temple. They were well fed; they were provided with literature, and materials for needlework were given to the female prisoners, but every precaution was taken to prevent them corresponding with their friends in Paris and abroad. Municipal guards paid frequent visits to the kitchen where the prisoners' food was cooked, and tasted the different dishes; the rolls of bread were cut into two to see that

no notes were hidden in them ; if the guards were in a hurry to eat their own dinner, they prodded the rolls with a fork, or even used their fingers. The table upon which the royal family dined was examined, as were the napkins and the table-cloth. The Dauphin's valet, Hue,* had been taken away from his little master soon after the entry of the royal family into the Temple, and had also been thrown into prison ; however, the prisoners had found another friend in the person of Turgu, one of the municipal guards, who was able to do them many services. While carrying their dinner up the dark staircase which led from the kitchen to the dining-room, he was often able to abstract the paper-stoppers which were used instead of corks in the bottles of wine and change them for others upon which important messages had been written with lemon-juice or extract of gall-nuts. When the paper happened to contain any very important communication, Turgu used to roll it round a little leaden ball and cover this with a piece of extra-thick paper ; he would then drop the whole into a bottle of almond milk of sufficient thickness to conceal anything at the bottom and carry it to one of the princesses. Sometimes the paper-stopper was left untouched and was used by the prisoners for writing their replies.

They had another method of communication with their friends. Mme. Elisabeth occupied a room in the Temple situated exactly over that of the king ; notes were enclosed

* Hue, François (1757-1819), valet to the Dauphin, shared the imprisonment of his royal master (to whom he was devoted) with the exception of a few months. On being released from prison after the 9th *Thermidor*, he continued his allegiance to the child's uncle, Louis XVIII., with whom he returned to France at the Restoration, being made that king's valet and treasurer of his military household.

in balls of sewing-thread, and these were fastened to the end of a thin rope made of string with which the packets of candles used by the prisoners were tied up. These were then let down from Mme. Elisabeth's window and caught by the king, while Cléry,* his faithful servant, diverted the guard's attention from these little operations, which always took place after nightfall. The balls of thread were stowed away under the stove, in the dirt-box—anywhere where they were not likely to be discovered by the gaolers. As Turgy, in his position as a municipal guard, was free to go in and out of the Temple, he was given a code of signs by which Mme. Elisabeth was able to ascertain what was taking place in the world outside. This code of signs shows much ingenuity on the part of the king's sister.

“ . . . When speaking of the English, put your right thumb to your right eye ; if they have landed on the coast of Nantes, put it to your right ear ; if on the coast of Calais, touch your left ear. If the Austrians are victorious on the Belgian frontier, put the second finger of your right hand to your right eye ; if they have entered Lille or Mayence, place your third finger as above ; if the King of Sardinia's† troops are victorious, use the fourth finger. Take great care to keep your finger a longer or a shorter time, according to the importance of the battle. When

* Cléry, Jean Baptiste Canthanet, Louis XVI.'s most devoted servant. After Madame Royale's liberation he was employed by Louis XVIII. on various confidential missions. In 1798 his diary, which he had kept throughout his sojourn in the Temple, was published in London. He died in Vienna in 1809.

† The King of Sardinia, Charles-Emmanuel II., had declared war against the new-born Republic. After the taking of Turin by Joubert in 1798, he was deprived of his possessions in Savoy, whereupon he withdrew to Sardinia, where he continued to reign, endeavouring to stamp out all spirit of independence in his subjects. Having abdicated in favour of his brother, he went to reside in Rome, where, clothed as a Jesuit, he lived the life of a recluse, dying there in 1819. His wife was Mme. Elisabeth's sister, Clotilde.

they are fifteen leagues from Paris, use the same fingers, but put them to your mouth. If the foreign powers talk of the royal family, touch your hair with your right hand. If the *Convention* is aware of that fact, use your left hand ; if the *Convention* passes to the order of the day, or if it is dissolved, pass your hand all over your head. If the troops advance or are successful, touch your nose with one finger of your right hand ; put all your fingers to your nose when they are within fifteen leagues of Paris. You will only touch the left side when you want to indicate the fact that the *Convention* still has the upper hand. In order to reply to any questions only use the right hand, never the left. . . .”

The balls of sewing-thread often contained communications from and to the Abbé Edgeworth ; by these means he was able to advise his royal penitent of his change of address and keep her informed of what was going on.

He wrote from his mother's convent his last letter, bearing the date 1792 ; it is to his friend, Dr. Moylan.

“ Paris. *November 21st, 1792.*

“ . . . We are still in the same state. No disorders have taken place in Paris lately. The few honest folk who have remained faithful to their God and to their king keep silence, and weep daily over the ruins of the altar and the throne without the smallest hope of seeing order re-established : I am almost the only member of our community who dares to lift up his head and to hope for better days. May Providence bring about what I foresee ! for the astonishing success of our armies is either a miracle in their favour or else a trap into which they are about to fall. For my part, I think it is far more likely to be a trap than a miracle. The mystery will be revealed in a few weeks' time. Meanwhile our only resource is to pray and to hope.

“ The persecution of the clergy is slowly diminishing ; and by taking a few precautions we are able to be of use

to those few who have remained faithful to their lawful pastor. We find the greatest difficulty in corresponding with him ; all letters sent to him and written by him from his present domicile are intercepted, or at least examined, which exposes the persons to whom they are addressed to great danger. I hope, however, that the scheme lately conceived and hitherto practised with success will continue.

“ I forgot to tell you in my last letter that your friend, Father Gagnières of Toulouse, was among the victims of September 2nd ; he had retired to the convent of Saint-François de Sales some time ago ; he was seized together with several other venerable men ; they were taken to the public prison, where they were assassinated on that fatal day. Father Nuellon, another of your friends, had suffered the same fate a few months before at Avignon. The Jesuits, who had been spared in the midst of this general destruction, have now nearly all been destroyed. My mother and my sister are still in their convent, perhaps the last existing in Paris. I really hope that they will be able to stay there without being annoyed until the end of our misfortunes. I beg you to pray for me, and I remain for life your devoted friend,

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

CHAPTER VII

The Abbé leaves Paris and retires to Choisy : The Archbishop of Paris charges him to tend his flock during his absence : The Abbé is requested to return to Paris in order to minister to the condemned king : His account of his interview with the king : Last moments of Louis XVI.

IN his last letter the Abbé mentioned the fact that “our armies,” that is to say, the armies of Condé and the Duke of Brunswick, had been extremely successful. The republican victories of Valmy and Jemmapes, however, blotted out the memory of any past victories and probably accounted for the conduct of the *Convention*, which now declared that the king must be tried for having encouraged the intrigues of the *émigrés*, and for having appealed to the foreign powers to succour him. Louis XVI. was therefore taken from his prison, tried, and condemned to be guillotined, the death sentence being approved by 387 votes to 345.

It was midnight on January 17th, 1793, when the king's counsel was ushered into the presence of the *Convention*, which had been sitting for thirty-seven hours. Vergniaud, who later compared the Revolution to Saturnus devouring his own offspring, and who himself passed under the knife of the guillotine, was commissioned to inform M. de Malesherbes, the king's advocate, of the fatal sentence.

To him, who to the last had thought that deportation was the worst that could happen to the king, was entrusted the task of telling his royal master of the fate that awaited him. Trembling with anguish and fatigue, the venerable old man had scarcely entered the king's cell when he fell to the ground choking with suppressed grief. Louis hurried to him and lifted him up, saying in a voice strangely calm :

" I was expecting what your tears have now told me. Calm yourself ! " *

In vain during the king's trial had the queen, Mme. Elisabeth, and Madame Royale begged to be allowed to see the *Journal des Débats*, which still exists and which contained an account of all that was said and done during those stormy days. They had to endure their agony and anxiety in ignorance of what was going on, while the cries of the newsvendors bawling beneath the barred windows of the Temple only increased their terror. They were obliged to curb their impatience and wait until the king himself could communicate with them by means of the balls of thread. The *Convention* had decreed that Louis could choose whatever priest he liked in order to prepare him for his last moments, and it was by this means of

* *Père Duchesne* gives another account of this same scene :

" I wished," says he, " to be present when sentence of death was read to Louis. The noble dignity of his bearing and of his speech made me shed tears of anger. I withdrew, determined to give in my resignation. One of my colleagues displayed scarcely more courage than myself. ' My friend,' said I to him, with my usual frankness, ' the constitutional priests who are members of the *Convention*, by voting for the king's death (notwithstanding the fact that their holy calling forbade them to do such a thing), formed the majority. Let these constitutional priests, therefore, lead him to the scaffold.' We decided that two municipal priests, named Jacques Roux and Jacques-Claude Bernard, should accompany Louis to his death. Both men executed their duties with the most complete callousness."



Markl, delt.

MALESHERBES

Fournier sculpt.

communication that the king asked for and obtained from Mme. Elisabeth the address of her father-confessor, whose acquaintance he had still to make. It was during an interview with his defender, M. de Malesherbes, that Louis XVI. said : " My sister has told me of a priest who has never taken the oath. Here is his address ; I beg you to go and ask him to come to me as soon as he can obtain permission to do so. It is a strange commission to entrust to such a philosopher as I know you to be. But if you had to suffer as much as I am suffering, and if you had to die as I shall probably die, I should wish you to feel as I feel now, for what I am now experiencing is more comforting than any philosophical reflections."

The Abbé de Firmont, as the Abbé Edgeworth was known to the Parisians, had been forced, in consequence of rumours concerning his presence in Paris, to flee in the late autumn of 1792 to Choisy, a little village about three leagues from the capital. To hide his identity he took the name of Edgeworth in his new hiding-place, where he lived in comparative peace for some weeks, unmolested by the villagers, who believed him to be a bankrupt Englishman of an amiable and peace-loving disposition who had fled from the turmoil of the capital. Shortly before Christmas he received an intimation from the Archbishop of Paris, M. de Juigné, who had been one of the first clergy to emigrate, that he wished him to direct his flock during his absence from France. Such a commission meant a return to the dangers through which he had hitherto passed unscathed, and necessitated fresh precautions.

Although flattered by the archbishop's high opinion of

his virtues and talents, the Abbé was secretly dismayed by the difficult task set before him. He was beginning to make his preparations for departure when he received a letter from M. de Malesherbes, whom he did not know personally, begging him to come and meet him at the house of Mme. de Senozan, M. de Malesherbes' sister, as he had something very important to impart to him. The Abbé, perhaps guessing the reason for this interview, hastened up to Paris, where M. de Malesherbes handed him a letter from the unfortunate king in which he begged for his assistance during his last hours should the sentence which had been passed upon him be carried out. With the humility born of suffering, the king besought the Abbé to grant him "this favour as a last proof of his attachment, and he hoped that he would not refuse it." Then, as if the old habits of imperiousness had been too strong for him, the king ended his letter with these words: "I can only permit you to send another ecclesiastic in your place, the choice of whom I leave to you, supposing you feel your courage unequal to the ordeal."

The Abbé Edgeworth, forgetful of the terrible danger to which he would expose himself if he acceded to the king's wish, and only conscious of immense pity for the unfortunate sovereign, assured M. de Malesherbes that he would hold himself in readiness to answer the king's call at any moment.

Several days passed in anguish and uncertainty. The Abbé, like many another, including M. de Malesherbes, hoped that the king would escape with a mild sentence, such as deportation; to him, with his belief in the sanctity of the king's person, the thought of that king being con-

demned to perish on the scaffold was not to be entertained even for a moment. About four o'clock on the afternoon of January 20th, 1793, a stranger came to the house where the Abbé believed that he was safely concealed and handed him a letter from the executive council couched in the following terms :

“ The executive council, having a matter of the greatest importance to communicate to the citizen Edgeworth de Firmont, invite him to come without losing a minute to the building where they hold their meetings.”

The Abbé having read the letter, the messenger informed him that he had received orders to accompany him, and that a carriage was waiting in the street below to take them to their destination ; whereupon, without a moment's hesitation, he descended and started with his unknown visitor.

The Abbé, however, was not the only person who was anxious to comfort and succour the condemned king. On learning of the sentence of death passed upon Louis XVI., a worthy Jesuit priest, a Breton of the name of René Legris Laval, a nephew of the Jesuit author Querbœuf, had come forward and begged the *Commune* to allow him to administer the Last Sacrament to his king ; he had added that he had not taken the oath of obedience to the constitution because his conscience had forbidden him to do so. This confession and the request which had preceded it were more than enough to compass his ruin. He was promptly arrested and thrown into prison. During his trial on the morrow he was defended by Chaumette,* whose ideals, although tainted with much

* Chaumette, a popular revolutionary orator, became procurator-syndic to the *Commune* in 1792 ; he was condemned to death in 1794.

that was extravagant, were scarcely less high than those of the accused. He was pardoned, thanks to the Mayor of Paris, who gave evidence as to the Jesuit's reputation as a good citizen. "It has been proved," he said, "that this individual is not a bad citizen, but a man whose mind has become completely unhinged by fanaticism."

This noble fanatic continued throughout the Revolution to succour the poor and suffering, and won esteem and honour during the Empire, but refused during the Restoration all promotion in his sacred profession.

Meanwhile the Abbé had arrived at the Tuileries, where he found the executive council assembled. Four years later, when he had managed to escape from the consequences of his noble self-sacrifice, and had taken refuge in England preparatory to returning to his native land, the Abbé wrote to his brother Ussher an account of this meeting and of the king's last hours.

"I found all the Ministers assembled. Consternation was written on their countenances. As soon as I appeared they arose and eagerly pressed round me. The Minister of Justice began to address me.

" 'Are you,' said he to me, 'the citizen Edgeworth de Firmont?'

"I replied: 'Yes.'

"The Minister continued: 'Louis Capet having expressed a desire to have you near him during his last moments, we have sent for you to know if you consent to render him the service he expects from you.'

"I replied that since the king had expressed this desire and had mentioned my name, it was my duty to go to him.

" 'In that case,' added the Minister, 'you will come with me to the Temple, whither I am now going.'

"He then gathered up a bundle of papers lying on his

desk, conferred for a moment in low tones with the other Ministers, and, ordering me to follow him, hastily left the room. The Minister's carriage, with an escort of mounted guards, awaited us at the door. I got into the vehicle and the Minister seated himself at my side.

"I was dressed in plain clothes, as were all the Catholic clergy at that time in Paris. Recollecting, however, the respect due to the king, who was unaccustomed to such a costume, and the respect equally due to the religion which, for the first time, was receiving a sort of official recognition from the government, I thought myself justified on this occasion in adopting the exterior signs of my calling; at least, it seemed to be my duty to try the experiment. So, before quitting the Tuileries, I spoke to the Minister; however, he, in terms which though perfectly polite forbade me to press my demand, rejected my proposal.

"The journey from the Tuileries to the Temple was accomplished in mournful silence. Nevertheless the Minister tried two or three times to say something to break it.

" 'Great God!' cried he, speaking of the king; 'what resignation! what courage! Nature alone cannot have endowed him with such strength of mind! There is something superhuman in it!'

"Such a confession afforded me a very natural excuse to enter into conversation with him, and to tell him a few fearful truths. I hesitated for a moment before beginning, but recollecting, on the one hand, that my first duty was to provide the king with the spiritual assistance he so earnestly desired, and, on the other hand, fearing that a heated argument, as it would have been, might perhaps prevent me from doing my duty, I determined to remain absolutely silent. The Minister seemed to understand the cause of my silence, and he did not again open his mouth during the rest of the journey.

"So we arrived at the Temple almost without having addressed one another. The first gate was immediately thrown open for us. But on approaching the building which separates the court from the garden we were

stopped : it was, I believe, the rule to do so. In order to gain admission, the commissaries had to come and inspect the visitors and find out what business brought them to this place. The Minister, like myself, seemed obliged to submit to this formality. He waited in silence for about a quarter of an hour. At last the commissaries, one of whom was a young man of about seventeen or eighteen years of age, appeared. They saluted the Minister as if they already knew him ; the latter, in a few words, told them who I was and the nature of my mission. They signed to me to follow them, and all together we crossed the garden leading to the tower.

“ Here a fearful scene, impossible to describe, took place. The door of the tower, although very narrow and very low, was heavily bolted and barred ; it opened with a horrid noise. We passed through a room filled with guards, and through another room even larger, which, by its appearance, must have once served as a chapel. Here the commissaries appointed to guard the king were assembled. In none of their faces did I perceive any traces of that consternation and embarrassment which I had remarked in the countenances of the Ministers ; there were about twelve of them, and most of them were attired in the costume of the Jacobins ; their appearance, their manners, their composure—everything showed them to be cruel creatures who would not hesitate to commit the greatest crimes. I must confess, however, that they were not all alike, and I fancied that I saw among their number some who by weakness alone had been beguiled into that horrid place.

“ However, the Minister took them all into a corner of the room, and in a low voice read to them the papers brought by him from the Tuileries. Having done this, he suddenly turned to me and ordered me to follow him ; however, the commissaries, who were apparently much moved, forbade me to do so. For the second time they conferred together and deliberated for a few minutes, whispering into each other’s ears. The result was that half of their number were to accompany the Minister

who was going to see the king, while the others were to remain below to keep guard over me.

“ When they had settled this, and the doors of the room were once more tightly closed, the oldest of the commissaries, with a polite but somewhat embarrassed air, approached me ; he spoke to me of the terrible responsibility resting on his shoulders, and begged me a thousand times to excuse the liberty which he was obliged to take, etc., etc. I gathered from this preamble that I was about to be searched, so I anticipated the operation by telling him that as even M. de Malesherbes’ reputation for honesty had not spared him this formality, I did not expect when I came to the Temple that an exception would be made in my favour ; that, however, I had nothing suspicious in my pockets, and that he only had to reassure himself. Notwithstanding my declaration I was searched from head to foot ; my snuff-box was opened and my snuff tried ; a little steel pencil case which I happened to have in my pocket was carefully examined lest it should contain a dagger. As to the papers which I had on me, they paid no attention to them ; then, having found nothing suspicious, they repeated the excuses with which they had begun and invited me to sit down. But hardly had I done so when two of the commissaries who had gone up to the king came down to tell me that I might see him. They led me up a winding staircase so narrow that two people could hardly pass each other ; at intervals this staircase was crossed by barriers, at each of which stood sentries on guard. These sentries, who were nearly all intoxicated, were veritable *sans culottes*, and the horrible cries uttered by them and re-echoed by the arches of the Temple were truly terrifying.

“ Having reached the king’s apartment, the doors of which were all open, I beheld the prince in the midst of a group of eight or ten persons, including the Minister of Justice and several members of the *Commune*, who had just read to him *the fatal decree whereby his death was fixed for the morrow*. He was standing in their midst, calm, quiet, even gracious, and none of those around him appeared

so calm as he seemed to be. On my arrival he made a sign with his hand to them to leave us. They obeyed without uttering a word ; he himself closed the door after them, and I remained in the room with him. Until that moment I had managed more or less successfully to dissemble the different emotions which agitated my soul ; but when I beheld the prince, once so powerful, now so unhappy, I was no longer able to master my feelings ; my tears flowed, notwithstanding my efforts to repress them, and I fell at his feet unable to utter any other words than the assurance of my deep grief. This little episode touched him a thousand times more than the decree which had just been read to him. First, he replied to my tears by shedding tears himself ; but soon taking fresh courage, ‘ Forgive me, sir,’ said he to me, ‘ forgive this moment of weakness, if such it can be called. For a long time I have lived surrounded by enemies to whom habit has in some measure accustomed me : but the sight of a loyal subject speaks in a different manner to my heart ; my eyes are no longer used to such a spectacle, and it touches me in spite of myself.’

“ Thus saying, he kindly assisted me to rise and caused me to pass into his closet, where he could converse more freely with me, for everything one said could be heard in his own apartment. This closet had been arranged in one of the turrets of the Temple ; it had neither curtains nor ornaments ; there was no fireplace, only a defective earthenware stove, and the entire furniture consisted of a table and three chairs with leather seats.

“ Then making me sit by him, he said to me : ‘ Sir, we must now think of an important matter to which I must devote myself entirely—alas ! the only important matter. For what signify all other matters in comparison ? However, I ask you to give me a few moments’ respite, for my family are soon coming down to me. Meanwhile,’ he added, ‘ here is a document which I am glad to be able to show you.’

“ So saying, he drew from his pocket a sealed paper of which he broke the seals : it was his last will and testa-

ment, made by him in the month of December, that is to say when he was uncertain as to whether he would be allowed to have a priest to assist him in his last moments. All those who have read this interesting document, so worthy of a Christian king, can imagine what a deep impression it made upon me. But they will doubtless be astonished to learn that the prince himself had the strength to read it in a loud voice, and even to read it twice. His voice was steady, and his face only betrayed emotion when he mentioned names dear to him ; then all his affection was visible ; he was obliged to pause for a moment, and he wept in spite of himself. But when mentioning his own misfortunes, he did not appear more moved than others do at the recital of the misfortunes of strangers.

“ Having finished reading this paper, the king, as the royal family had not appeared, hastened to ask me news of his clergy, and of the present state of the Church in France. Notwithstanding the strict watch kept over him in his prison, he had learnt some news ; he knew, in short, that the French ecclesiastics had been obliged to expatriate themselves, and that they had been given shelter in London, but he knew no details.

“ I made it my duty to tell him all I knew, which, however, was not much, yet it seemed to make the deepest impression upon him ; while lamenting the misfortunes of the clergy, he ceased not to manifest his admiration for the generosity of the English people in succouring them. He did not confine himself to general subjects ; but, soon entering into details which astonished me, he desired to know what had become of several ecclesiastics in whom he seemed to take a special interest. Monseigneur the Cardinal de La Rochefoucault and Monseigneur the Bishop of Clermont seemed to interest him especially. But his attention redoubled when I mentioned the name of the Archbishop of Paris. He asked me where he was and if I could write to him.

“ ‘ Tell him,’ said he, ‘ that I die faithful to his teaching and that I have never had any other pastor than him.



all that heart-rending anguish ! During nearly a quarter of an hour not one word was spoken, there were neither tears nor sobs—only piercing shrieks, which must have been audible outside the walls of the tower. The king, the queen, Monseigneur the Dauphin, Madame Elisabeth, Madame Royale were all lamenting together, and their voices seemed to mingle. At last, having no more strength left to weep, their tears ceased to flow. They then began to converse in low tones. This conversation lasted about an hour ; then the king, hoping to behold them on the morrow, dismissed his family.

“ He immediately returned to me, but in a state of trouble and agitation which proved how cruelly he had suffered.

“ ‘ Ah ! sir,’ said he, throwing himself down on a chair, ‘ what a meeting I have just had ! How tenderly I love and how tenderly am I loved ! It is over ; let us forget everything else and only think of our task ; I must now concentrate all my thoughts on that affair.’

“ He continued thus to address me in terms which showed his tenderness and courage, when Cléry came to suggest that he should eat some supper. The king hesitated for a moment ; then, having reflected, he accepted the offer. The supper did not last more than five minutes. On returning to the closet he proposed to me that I should come with him. My courage was well-nigh gone, but I obeyed in order to oblige him.

“ One thought had completely occupied my mind since I had become better acquainted with the king, and that was to procure for him at any cost the Holy Communion of which he had so long been deprived. I might have brought it to him in secret, as we were obliged to do for all the faithful who were unable to leave their homes ; but the severe examination which I should have to undergo on entering the Temple, and the profanation which would have certainly ensued, afforded me ample reasons to prevent me from so doing.

“ I had therefore no other resource but to say mass in the king’s own chamber, if I could manage to do so. I

broached the subject to him ; but at first he seemed terrified at the idea. However, as he fully realised the value of this favour, and as he himself earnestly desired it, only opposing it for fear of seeing me compromised, I begged him to give me his consent, promising him to use prudence and discretion. He gave it at last, saying :

“ ‘ Go, but I fear you will not succeed, for I know the men with whom you will have to deal—they only consent when they cannot refuse.’ ”

“ Provided with this permission, I asked to be conducted to the council chamber, and there I made my demand in the king’s name.

“ This demand, for which the commissaries of the tower were totally unprepared, completely disconcerted them, and they endeavoured to evade the question several times.

“ ‘ Where can we find a priest at this late hour ? ’ they asked me. ‘ And, even supposing we find one, how can we get the necessary vestments and vessels ? ’ ”

“ I replied : ‘ The priest is already found, for I am here ; as for the vestments, the nearest church can provide them ; you have only to send for them.* Besides which, my demand is just, and you would be going beyond your own principles if you refused it.’ ”

“ One of the commissaries, acting as spokesman, then gave me to understand in well-guarded terms that my demand was probably only a snare, and that, under pretence of administering Communion to the king, I might poison him. He added :

“ ‘ History contains too many examples of such conduct for us not to be very cautious.’ ”

“ I contented myself with gazing fixedly at the man, saying :

“ ‘ The severe search to which I was subjected on entering this building ought to have convinced you that I had no poison secreted on my person : therefore, if to-morrow any is found in my possession, I shall have got

* The chapel of the old Couvent des Capucins du Marais provided the necessary vestments and vessels.

it from you, since all I ask to enable me to celebrate mass must pass through your hands.'

"He was about to reply when his companions silenced him. In order to make further objections, they told me that the members of the council were not all present, therefore they could do nothing, but that they would summon the absent members and would let me know the result of their deliberations.

"A quarter of an hour passed in summoning the absent members and in deliberating; at the end of that time I was again ushered into their presence, when the president, addressing me, said:

" 'Citizen minister, the council having considered the request made by you in the name of Louis Capet, resolves that, as this request was made in conformity with the law which decrees that all citizens are free to exercise whatever religion they prefer, it shall be granted. However, we make two conditions: first, that you immediately make your request in writing and sign it; secondly, that you finish your service by seven o'clock at the latest, because Louis Capet must start for the place of execution at eight o'clock.'

"These words were uttered (as indeed were his preceding words) with all the coolness characterising an atrocious mind capable of remorselessly plotting the greatest crime. Be this as it may, I put my request on paper, and left it lying on the bureau. I was immediately taken up again to the apartment of the king, who was anxiously awaiting the issue of this matter; the short account I gave him, taking care to conceal painful details, appeared to cause him the keenest pleasure.

"It was already past ten o'clock, and I remained shut up with the king until far into the night; but on seeing him show signs of fatigue, I suggested to him that he should take a little rest. He consented with his usual affability and induced me to do the same. At his command I went into the little room occupied by Cléry. This room was only separated from the king's chamber by a partition; and while I was overwhelmed with the most

cruel reflections, I could hear the prince calmly give his orders for the morrow and retire to rest.

"At five o'clock he arose and made his toilet as usual ; a short time after he sent for me and conversed with me for nearly an hour in the closet in which he had received me the night before. On leaving him I found an altar ready arranged in the king's apartment : the commissaries had fulfilled my request to the very letter ; they had even exceeded my wishes, for I had only asked for what was absolutely necessary.

"The king heard mass, kneeling on the floor without any *prie-dieu*, without even a cushion, and then he communicated. I afterwards left him for a short space that he might finish his prayers. He soon sent for me again ; I found him seated close to the stove, trying to warm himself.

" ' My God ! ' he said, ' how happy I am to have my principles ! Where should I be without them ? But with them, how sweet death ought to appear to me ! Yes, there is an incorruptible Judge on high who will do me the justice which mankind here below refuses me.'

"The services rendered by me to the king do not permit me to reveal certain details of the different conversations which he held with me during the last sixteen hours of his life ; but from the little I can say, one may judge of all I might say if I were permitted to reveal the whole truth.

"Day was beginning to dawn and already the drums were beating all over Paris. From the tower we could hear these extraordinary sounds very distinctly, and I must confess that they froze the blood in my veins. But the king was calmer than I ; for, after having listened for a moment, he said to me without any trace of emotion :

" ' The national guards are beginning to assemble.'

"Shortly after, several detachments of cavalry entered the courtyard of the Temple, when we could clearly distinguish the officers' voices and the horses' hoofs. The king, still listening, said to me with the same coolness :

" ' They seem to be approaching.'

" On taking leave of the queen on the previous evening he had promised to see her once more on the morrow ; and now, with his usual kindness, he wished to keep his promise.

" But I urgently begged him not to expose her to an ordeal to which her strength was not equal. He hesitated for a moment ; and then, with an expression of the deepest sorrow, he said :

" ' You are right, sir, it would kill her ; it is better for me to deprive myself of this sad consolation and to let her live in hope for a few moments longer.'

" From seven to eight o'clock people frequently came and knocked at the door of the closet in which I was shut up with the king, and each time I trembled with fear lest it should be the last ; but the king, calmer than I, rose without any emotion, went to the door and quietly replied to those who had thus come to interrupt us. I know not who these persons were, but certainly among their number there must have been one of the greatest monsters of the revolution, for I heard him distinctly say to the king in mocking tones :

" ' Oh ! oh ! that was all very fine when you were king, but you are no longer king !'

" The prince did not reply ; but on returning to me he remarked :

" ' See how these people treat me ! . . but I must learn how to suffer !'

" Another time, after having replied to one of the commissaries who had just interrupted us, he came back to the closet and said with a smile :

" ' These people imagine they see daggers and poison in every corner. They are afraid that I shall kill myself : alas ! they know me very little. It would be weak of me to kill myself. No ! since I must die, I will do so bravely !'

" At last the final knock came. Santerre* and his band were outside. The king opened the door as usual.

* Santerre, Claude (1752-1808), a brewer, was made general of the Paris national guards, and was celebrated for his cruelty during the Reign of Terror

They informed him (I could not hear in what terms) that he must go to his death. He said to them in an authoritative tone :

“ ‘ I am busy : wait for me here. I will be with you in a few minutes.’ ”

“ So saying he closed the door and, flinging himself at my feet, said to me :

“ ‘ Sir, give me your last blessing, and pray to God that He may sustain me to the end ! ’ ”

“ He soon arose and, leaving the closet, advanced towards the men, who were still standing in his bedroom. Their countenances expressed the greatest assurance. However, as they had kept their hats upon their heads, the king, remarking this fact, immediately asked for his own ; while Cléry, bathed in tears, ran to fetch it, the king said to them :

“ ‘ Is there among your number a member of the *Commune* ? for if there be one, I will give him this paper.’ ”

“ It was his will, and one of the assistants took it from his hand.

“ ‘ I also recommend to the *Commune* Cléry, my valet, with whose services I have ever been most satisfied : you will kindly give him my watch and all my personal effects, including everything I own here and everything of which the *Commune* has charge. I also desire that, as a reward for the attachment shown to me by him, he may enter the service of the queen, *my wife*.’ ”

“ No one replying, the king added in a calm tone : ‘ Let us go ! ’ ”

“ At these words the whole band filed off.* The king crossed the first courtyard (formerly a garden) on foot. He turned round once or twice and gazed towards the tower as if to bid farewell to all he loved on earth ; as he

* The Abbé Edgeworth omits two little incidents which are reproduced in Cléry's memoirs. While descending the staircase of the Temple, the king gave a sum of money, which M. de Malesherbes had lately managed to convey to him, to one of the municipal guards, begging him to keep it ; this, however, the other guards would not let him do, but made him share it with them. On meeting the turnkey, whom he had had occasion to scold rather roughly on the previous evening, he said to him : “ Mathieu, I am sorry I offended you.”

turned, I saw that he was striving to gather all his strength and courage. A hired coach was waiting in the second courtyard. Two gendarmes opened the door on the king's approach ; one of them got in first and took the back seat. The king then entered the vehicle and placed me by his side on the front seat. The other gendarmes jumped up behind and shut the door. They tell me that one of these two men was a priest in disguise ; I could wish, for the honour of the priesthood, that this report were without foundation. They also tell me that these two men had orders to assassinate the king at the slightest sign of any popular movement. I do not know whether this is true, but it seems to me that, unless they had with them other arms than those which I saw, it would have been difficult for them to execute their project ; for I could only see their muskets, which they could not possibly have used. However, this dreaded popular movement in favour of the king was nothing but a chimera. A great number of persons devoted to his cause had determined to use force and to wrest him from his executioners' clutches, or at least to endeavour to do so. Two of the principal actors, two young men, members of a very well-known family, had come to warn me on the previous evening ; and I confess that, without daring to abandon all hope, a faint glimmer of trust burned in my breast until I arrived at the foot of the scaffold. I have since heard that the orders concerning this fearful morning's work had been planned with such skill and executed with such precision that, of the four or five hundred persons who had thus devoted themselves to the prince's cause, only twenty-five succeeded in reaching the place of meeting. All the others, owing to precautions taken from the very earliest hours of the morning in all the streets of Paris, were unable even to leave their houses.

" The king, on finding himself in a closed carriage, where he could neither speak to nor hear me without witnesses, kept silent. I then gave him my breviary, the only book I had with me ; he accepted it with marked pleasure. He even expressed a wish for me to show him

the psalms most fitted to his situation, and he recited them with me. The gendarmes, without opening their mouths, appeared both astonished and confounded at the quiet piety of a monarch whom they had probably hardly seen until that moment. The journey lasted nearly two hours. All the streets were lined with rows of armed citizens, some carrying pikes and some muskets. The coach itself was surrounded with an imposing body of troops, formed most probably of all the most corrupt characters in Paris. To crown all these precautions, a number of drummers had been placed at the horses' heads that they, by beating their drums, might drown the cries raised in the king's favour. But how could those cries have been heard? Nobody was to be seen at any of the doors or windows of the houses situated along the route; and in the streets one only saw armed citizens, that is to say, citizens who in their weakness had been persuaded to assist at a crime which perhaps they secretly abhorred.

"At last the coach with its silent burden entered the Place Louis XV. and stopped in the centre of a large empty space which had been left round the scaffold. This space was surrounded with cannons; beyond, as far as the eye could see, stretched a huge armed multitude. As soon as the king perceived that the coach had stopped, he turned towards me and whispered in my ear: 'We have arrived, unless I am mistaken.'

"By my silence I intimated that he had guessed aright. One of the executioners came to open the door; the gendarmes wished to descend, but the king stopped them and, placing his hand on my knee, said in a commanding tone:

"'I commend this gentleman to your care; be careful that he receives no insult after my death. I charge you to see to the matter.'

"As the men did not reply, the king was about to repeat his speech in a louder voice, when one of them, interrupting him, said:

"'Yes, yes, we will take care of him. Let us be

going !' I must here add that these words were uttered in a tone which at any other time, when I was more master of my senses, would have frozen the blood in my veins.

"As soon as the king had alighted from the coach, three executioners surrounded him and wished to disrobe him. But he proudly repulsed their efforts, unfastened his collar, opened and arranged his shirt with his own hands !

"The executioners, momentarily disconcerted by the king's proud countenance, now appeared to recover all their former audacity. They again closed round him and made as if to fasten his hands.

" 'What do you want to do ?' asked the prince, quickly withdrawing his hands.

"One of the executioners replied : 'We want to tie your hands.'

" 'To tie my hands ?' answered the king with a cry of indignation ; 'I will never consent to such an indignity. Do as you have been commanded to do ; but you shall not fasten my hands, so give up that idea.'

"The executioners insisted ; they raised their voices and already made as if to summon help so as to oblige him to submit.

"Behold, then, perhaps the most fearful moment of that melancholy morning ! A minute later and the best of kings was the victim, under the very eyes of his rebellious subjects, of an outrage rendered a thousandfold more insupportable than death by the violence which they seemed about to employ. He apparently feared this violence himself, for, turning towards me, he looked fixedly at me as if asking my advice. Alas ! it was impossible for me to give him any advice in the matter, and I could only reply with silence. But as he continued to gaze at me : 'Sire !' said I, weeping, 'in this new outrage I behold but another and a final resemblance between your Majesty and the God who will reward you.'

"At these words he gazed up into the heavens with an expression of sorrow impossible to describe.

" 'Verily I need this example to enable me to submit

to such an affront,' said he. Then, turning towards the executioners, he added : ' Do what you will with me. I will drain the cup to the very dregs ! '

" The steps leading to the scaffold were extremely steep and difficult to mount. The king was obliged to lean on my arm ; and by the difficulty he seemed to experience in ascending, I feared for a moment that his courage was beginning to fail him. But what was my astonishment when, the king having reached the last step, I beheld him escape, so to speak, from my hands, walk with a firm tread the whole length of the scaffold, silence with a single glance the fifteen or twenty drummers placed in front of him, and, in such a loud voice that he could be heard at the Pont-Tournant, pronounce these ever-memorable words :

" ' I die innocent of all the crimes imputed to me. I forgive the authors of my death, and I pray God that the blood which you are about to shed may never fall upon the head of France——'

" He would have added more, but a man on horseback wearing the national uniform suddenly rushed up, brandishing his sword, and with furious cries obliged the drummers to beat their drums. Several voices were then heard urging on the executioners. The latter appeared to gather up their courage ; then, violently seizing the most virtuous of kings, they dragged him under the knife which, with one blow, cut off his head.

" All this was but the work of a few seconds. The youngest of the executioners (he did not appear more than eighteen years of age) immediately picked up the head and, walking round the scaffold, showed it to the people. This monstrous ceremony was accompanied with the most atrocious yells and the most indecent gestures. For a few seconds a mournful silence reigned, but soon cries of ' Long live the Republic ! ' rent the air. These cries rapidly became more numerous, and in less than ten minutes the whole multitude were flinging their hats into the air and repeating it a thousand times.—January 21st, 1793, at ten minutes past ten in the morning."

CHAPTER VIII

The Abbé endeavours to effect his escape : His last interview with M. de Malesherbes : He takes shelter with the Baron de la Lezardière : He still continues his visits to Paris : His hiding-place is invaded and he is forced to flee : He goes to Montigny under the name of *Monsieur Essex* : A mysterious visitor : He flees to Fontainebleau and then to Bayeux : Imprisonment of the Abbé's mother and sister : He is again forced to hide : Details of the imprisonment of the royal family : More plots are made to liberate the prisoners in the Temple : The nuns are ordered to leave their convents : Execution of Marie-Antoinette : All places of worship are closed : The Goddess of Reason is enthroned in Notre Dame.

ON hearing the knife fall and with it the head of his royal penitent, the Abbé sank on his knees murmuring prayers for the dead. It was reported that the Abbé's last words to the unhappy king were, " Son of Saint-Louis, ascend to heaven ! "

No mention, however, is made of this speech in the Abbé's own narrative. When questioned as to whether he had uttered the words, he confessed that he was in such a state of despair and horror at the time of the king's execution that he was absolutely unable to say what he had said or done. Brought up in a school which taught that the person of the king was sacred, the Abbé must have felt that the scene at which he had just assisted was one of the greatest tragedies in the world's history. It is probable that the sentence was never uttered by the Abbé

himself ; Lacretelle* indeed, later, half confessed to having invented it for a Parisian newspaper.

During the excitement and confusion which followed the king's execution the Abbé, though bespattered with the blood of the royal victim and surrounded by twenty or thirty thousand men, women and children, determined to try and escape.

The spectators seemed mesmerised by the spectacle of the Abbé kneeling by his unfortunate master's decapitated body.

Summoning all his courage, he quickly descended the scaffold and, choosing a place where the crowd seemed somewhat less dense, walked leisurely towards that spot, expecting to be arrested every moment. To his surprise no one opposed his departure. The first few rows of spectators opened to let him pass, and by the time he had reached the fourth and fifth row he had become a mere spectator attired in a shabby coat who had seen the sight which had gathered all Paris to that huge place, and who was anxious to get back to his business. He was thus able to thread his way through the crowd utterly unnoticed. The king, before his death, had given the Abbé a very important message for M. de Malesherbes, so he went immediately to his house. He found him bathed in tears and hardly able to speak.

* Lacretelle, Pierre Louis (1766-1855), was first employed as a reporter on the staff of the celebrated *Journal des Débats* ; he was outlawed by a decree passed the 13 *Verdémiaire*, an IV., arrested on the 18th *Fructidor*, an V., and kept in prison until the 18th *Brumaire*. He then divided his time between writing and lecturing on history at the *Faculté de Paris*. Louis XVIII. raised him to the peerage during the Restoration. Lacretelle was also the author of a poem entitled, *Madame sortant du Temple*.

"So all is over, my dear Abbé," said the old man at length. "So it is quite true that religion alone can give us strength to endure with dignity these terrible trials. Accept my thanks and those of all true Frenchmen for the fidelity which you have shown towards your good master. It is our false philosophy, by which I confess that I myself have been deceived, which has precipitated us down this abyss of destruction." Then he added, as if realising that the Abbé was in danger of sharing the fate of the unhappy king: "Flee, my dear sir, flee from this land of horror, where unchained tigers roam at liberty. Never, never will they forgive you for your devotion to the most unfortunate of kings; and the duty fulfilled by you this day is a crime which they will punish sooner or later. I myself, although less exposed to their fury than you, intend to retire to my country-house without further delay. But you, my dear sir, you must not only leave Paris, but France also, for you will be safe nowhere." *

The Abbé, while thoroughly agreeing with M. de Malesherbes that the only chance of saving his life was to flee, still felt that he ought not to abandon Mme. Elisabeth and

* A few weeks later (March 10th, 1793), M. de Malesherbes, for his services to a losing cause, paid the price of his life. He did not suffer alone; with him were guillotined his daughter, Mme. Lepelletier de Rosambo, his granddaughter, Mme. de Châteaubriant, and the latter's husband. His nephew and his sister, Mme. de Senozan, were guillotined soon after.

While leaving his prison for the scaffold, M. de Malesherbes, bent with years and sorrows, passed Mlle. de Sombreuil, the heroine of a legend invented by the royalists, who declared that Mlle. de Sombreuil had purchased her father's pardon at the cost of drinking a cup of human blood. The truth is somewhat different. Mlle. de Sombreuil, daughter of a governor of the Invalides, on her father being imprisoned in 1792 asked and obtained permission to share his imprisonment. During the massacres of September she, by her tears and supplications and by covering her father's body with her own, persuaded his gaolers

the diocese committed to his charge by the exiled Archbishop of Paris. He therefore determined to retire to Choisy, which had once before proved itself a safe hiding-place. Before setting out with the faithful servant named Louis Bousset, who had accompanied him on his previous visit to Choisy and who was never again to leave him during his lifetime, he wrote to his sister to tell her that he was alive and well. At nightfall he ventured forth, called a coach and drove off to Choisy, to the house of the Baron de a Lézardière, an aged and a wealthy friend who had already offered to give him a home. M. de La Lézardière also gave shelter to another refugee, the Comte de Vaugirard, a gentleman possessed of a very cool head. The baron's wife had lost her life by the knife of the guillotine on the very day and at the very same hour as Louis XVI. The sight of the Abbé must have been a renewal of grief to the unhappy widower, but he made him welcome and lodged him in the poor dead woman's room. Here he lived incognito for three months, lovingly tended by the baron and his whole family. But his troubles were by no means over.

Three Parisian clubs, including the *Club des Jacobins*, had demanded his head.† A report having been circulated that he had escaped to England, where he was engaged

to do him no harm. On seeing this charming girl, Mme. de Rosambo, who was supporting her father, cried :

" Adieu, *mon amie*, adieu ! To you belong the glory and the pleasure of having been able to save your father from the hands of his executioners ; to me belongs the consolation of being able to die with my father ! "

Mlle. de Sombreuil was able to leave France with her father in 1794. She married, while in exile, the Comte de Villelune, and returned to France in 1815. She died at Avignon in 1823, aged forty-nine.

† The king's own confessor, Father Hébert, was guillotined in the following year.

in correspondence not only with some of the most influential *émigrés*, but even with the hated Pitt, the Abbé and his friends imagined that they had no cause to fear a domiciliary visit. Nevertheless, when journeying to Paris, as he was obliged to do from time to time to attend to the affairs of his diocese, the Abbé always took the precaution of travelling by night. These visits usually lasted a couple of days and, though he saw many people, his secret was well guarded.

Notwithstanding all his efforts, the diocese commended to his care began to suffer from his prolonged absence, and he wrote a letter to the Archbishop of Paris asking what he was to do ; but this letter unfortunately went astray and fell into the hands of the *Comité de salut public*.

One morning early in the month of April, while the de La Lézardiére family were peacefully occupied over their usual tasks, they were startled by the news that two hundred *sans culottes* with two cannons were approaching the *château*. The Abbé immediately hastened to burn all his important papers and to hide the church ornaments and vestments under piles of household linen. One of the servants tried to leave the *château* before the soldiers could enter, but he was stopped. The baron and his family, convinced that these armed men had come to seize the Abbé, threw themselves at his feet and, with tears in their eyes, besought him to flee while there was still time to do so.

Yielding to their prayers, still hoping that he might be of use to the imprisoned princess, he slipped out of the house by a little door leading into the garden. Then he fled across the fields till he reached a spot called La Belle

Epine, on the road to Fontainebleau, where he remained until nightfall, enduring agonies of fear lest his host should suffer for having sheltered him.

With a heavy heart he crept back in the twilight to the *château*. As he was returning, he was met by his servant Louis Bousset, who informed him that his kind friend, the Baron de La Lézardière, had been arrested and marched off to Paris with his son and his three daughters.* Four trunks of papers had been seized and placed on a cart. The Comte de Vaugirard had been able to escape from the *château* and was now in hiding in the cottage of a kind-hearted peasant. The Abbé afterwards learnt that, during the journey to Paris, the soldiers had several times hesitated whether they should not despatch their victims then and there and thus save themselves much trouble and unnecessary waste of valuable time. The baron, from his prison, managed to communicate with the Abbé, who was now the sole occupant of the *château*, and assured him that nothing would ever make him divulge his guest's identity. After ten days spent in prison, the baron and his family were allowed to return home. The Comte de Vaugirard, having recovered from his fright, instead of fleeing still farther into the country, coolly went up to Paris and complained to the *Tribunal révolutionnaire* of the insolent treatment which he had experienced at the hands of its agents. Whereupon an

* One of the baron's daughters, named Marie-Pauline de La Lézardière, was a very remarkable woman. Born in 1753 at the *château* of Verci in La Vendée, she had already written a voluminous work upon the political legislature of the French monarchy, which was being printed when the Revolution interrupted the operation and forced her to emigrate. During her absence from France the first edition of her book was almost entirely destroyed. Her brother eventually published the work after her death, which occurred in 1835.

order for his arrest was issued ; and arrested he would certainly have been if his friends had not persuaded him to flee the country without more ado.

During his host's enforced absence, the Abbé busied himself destroying his papers, many of which concerned the royal family ; he was most loath to part with the letters which Mme. Elisabeth had written to him from her prison. For the second time in his life he had to destroy, with his own hands, some of his most precious possessions.

Trembling for the future, the Abbé welcomed the baron and his family back to the desolate *château*. They were not left long in peace, for only a few days later his host, on a Sunday morning, received a warning that his house was about to be invaded for the second time. The Abbé instantly left the *château*, passing in the road the republican troops, who, thanks to his coat of the then fashionable " national blue " cloth and his hair tied up in a knot, failed to recognise him as the priest who had hitherto managed to evade them so successfully.

Leaving the grounds of the *château*, the Abbé turned in the direction of Villeneuve Saint-Georges and was soon joined by his servant. With nightfall they returned once more to Choisy and remained there until April 16th, when they went to Paris that the Abbé might bid farewell to his mother, whom he was never to see again. The last alarm had convinced him that Choisy was no longer a safe hiding-place ; so, having arranged several matters in connection with his diocese, he left Paris on the morrow, in a coach hired under the name of " Monsieur Essex," for Montigny, near Orleans, where, having introduced himself as a friend of the family, he received a very hospitable

welcome from the Comte de Rochechouart (or Rochoir, as one of the Abbé's biographers spells it). Shortly after his arrival at Montigny, "Monsieur Essex" imprudently wrote to Mme. Elisabeth through her agent, giving her his new address. It was not until after he had posted his letter that he learnt that the agent had just been arrested for countenancing a correspondence between a royal prisoner and an *émigré*. To make matters worse, one of the Abbé's friends, while being questioned by the *Comité de salut public* concerning the affair, unfortunately revealed the new name which he had adopted. The letter addressed to the agent now in prison was seized and read by the *Comité*, and it was remarked that the handwriting was the same as the handwriting on an anonymous letter addressed to the exiled Archbishop of Paris which had lately fallen into the clutches of the *Comité*. The Abbé's arrest was now only a question of time.

About this time the count showed his guest an article inserted in a newspaper by the *Comité de salut public*, in which it was stated that a certain "Monsieur Essex" had given the late king, some time before his death, a letter from the Princesse de Lamballe; the editor of the newspaper added that this "Monsieur Essex" himself had told him of the fact.

When the newspaper was read by the inhabitants of Montigny, the resemblance between the two names was remarked; people began to think that something in the manners and appearance of the Comte de Rochechouart's guest denoted the priest. The Abbé, fearful of compromising his host, and realising that he would soon have to flee once more, hastened to reveal to him the secret of

his identity, at the same time informing him that he must leave his hospitable house and seek shelter farther from the capital. His fears were redoubled when he learnt that his servant, Louis Bousset, had also received a copy of the newspaper from a kind-hearted physician whose suspicions had already been aroused. Recommending Bousset to be careful as to what he said and did, the Abbé immediately began to make plans for a hurried flight, and wrote to ask advice from his friend, the Baron de La Lézardière, who was about to suffer further persecution for having sheltered a priest.

A few days later a stranger, apparently of noble birth, appeared at the residence of the Comte de Rochechouart and asked to be allowed to speak to "Monsieur Essex." When he found himself alone with the Abbé, he said :

"Sir, your presence here is known to everybody. Hitherto your quiet demeanour has excited no suspicions, but a paragraph which has lately appeared in the *Gazette* has caused much excitement among the people : all eyes are fixed on you. Kindly read this article, and if you find the description in it answers to your person, then, my dear sir, allow one who loved you before he knew you to beg you to consider your own safety and to flee while there is yet time ; if you do not do so, you will most certainly be arrested ! "

This unexpected visit and the knowledge that his new name was known to the *Comité de salut public* determined the Abbé to go to Fontainebleau without waiting for the Baron de La Lézardière's reply ; he chose this town as he considered it one of the quietest and safest places in France.

As the *armée de Mayence* had just requisitioned all the horses and vehicles in the country round about, the Abbé would have been obliged to make the journey on foot had not a priest who, although he had taken the oath of obedience to the new constitution, still felt pity for the refugee, his brother in religion, lent him his carriage, together with his servant, a peasant lad. The journey was an exciting one, as the three travellers were drawn by a horse which had never before been between the shafts of a carriage.

Arrived in Fontainebleau, the Abbé lodged for a few days in the house of an ex-priest who, aided by his sister, kept a kind of village school. In this town he found an old friend in the person of Mme. Pallavicini, who placed her house, purse, and servants at his disposal.

Even here he was not in safety. A decree having been passed that all foreigners were to be arrested, the luckless Abbé was obliged to seek yet another shelter. His faithful friend, the Baron de La Lézardière, again came to his rescue by sending an old and trusted family servant to aid him in his flight. During their journey to Rouen, the *diligence* in which they were travelling was stopped by a band of soldiers who had orders to examine and arrest any suspicious looking travellers. For once the Abbé's courage gave way ; he thought that his last hour had come ; he lost his voice from terror. However, the baron's servant, with ready wit, managed so skilfully to hoodwink the soldiers that the three travellers were allowed to continue their journey, and eventually they reached Bayeux in Normandy, where the Abbé and Louis Bousset lived for three years. From Bayeux escape to

England would have been comparatively easy ; but such was his devotion to the unfortunate Mme. Elisabeth, that he could not make up his mind to leave France as long as there was any hope of saving her life or any chance of being requested to perform the same painful duty which he had discharged towards her brother.

Luckily for the Abbé, the municipality of the town of Bayeux was chiefly composed of men who secretly favoured the royal cause, and on the arrival of the mysterious strangers they were careful to ask no inconvenient questions. A few months later the municipality was changed, and people soon forgot that the Abbé was a comparative stranger to the locality.

He lodged for two years with a Mme. Foss, and shortly after his arrival was joined by the Baron de La Lézardière. This unfortunate man, hunted from town to town, deprived of his domains and of his *château*, which had been burnt to the ground, having lost nearly all his friends in the Revolution, arrived at Bayeux with his three daughters and a son in a state of almost complete penury. The good Abbé, overjoyed to have an opportunity of repaying his debt of gratitude, was able, thanks to funds supplied to him by numerous friends, and chiefly by his brother Ussher, to lighten somewhat the old man's burden of care. The inhabitants of Bayeux believed the latter to be a fugitive from La Vendée, and this erroneous belief doubtless contributed to the safety of the little colony of refugees.

Shortly after the arrival of the de La Lézardière family, the baron received the news of the death of two of his sons ; the third had been lately massacred, and the fourth

was about to appear before the tribunal which subsequently condemned him to death. Not long afterwards news came that the baron's four sisters had all been shot down while fleeing from some soldiers across a field.

Neither did the hand of sorrow spare the Abbé, for he learnt that his mother and his sister had also been arrested, and had been imprisoned in the Convent of the Austin Nuns, where the elder lady fell grievously ill and eventually died. This convent had once been a fashionable educational establishment for young Catholic girls. Many English and Irish families, including the Townleys, the Pastons, the Fermors and the Blounts, had sent their daughters there. Mrs. Piozzi twice visited the convent, and on the occasion of her second visit, in 1784, had made some cutting remarks in her diary concerning the very worldly life led by the occupants. Mrs. and Miss Edgeworth's fellow-prisoners included several actresses, Mme. de Rosambo, M. de Malesherbes' daughter, George Sand's grandmother, Mme. Dupin, and a bird-seller's daughter, Victoire Delaborde, who, strange to say, afterwards married Mme. Dupin's son, Maurice.

After Mrs. Edgeworth's death her daughter Betty, suspected of being engaged in a secret correspondence with her brother, for thirteen months was dragged from prison to prison ; she was finally released and lived to a good old age.

One day the little colony of refugees received notice that a census was about to be taken of all the inhabitants of Bayeux with a view to forcing all young men to serve in the national guards, whereupon the Abbé, judging that it would be prudent to disappear for a time, took shelter

in a peasant woman's cottage, where he lay hidden in a hayloft without fire or candle for eight days. At the end of this time he returned to his friends only to find that his name had been included, notwithstanding his absence, among the list of inhabitants, and that he would be forced to find a substitute to take his place in the national guards; this, however, was an easy matter, thanks to the funds supplied by his brother Ussher and various friends.

It was then decided that the Abbé, in order to throw off all suspicion, should be called "Henry" as long as he continued to live with the de La Lézardière family. Not very long after this, another domiciliary visit was made. Three commissaries, headed by an ex-priest who had used his lately acquired liberty by marrying three times and divorcing two of his "wives" in as many years, appeared at the refugee's domicile demanding to see all the inhabitants, that they might know exactly how many they numbered.

The Abbé, on hearing loud voices in the entry, prudently retired into an upper chamber.

Turning towards Mlle. de La Lézardière, the ex-priest said roughly: "Do the persons here assembled represent all the inhabitants of this dwelling?"

Mlle. de La Lézardière, not wishing to tell a lie, replied: "We have a friend of the family named Henry staying with us. If you like I will go and ask him his other name."

"It is of no consequence," answered the commissaries, and they went off quite satisfied with their visit.

The safety of the little party was likewise assured by the

fact that they had in their employ a serving-maid who was a fervent royalist ; this girl had a brother, a joiner by trade and a member of the *Comité révolutionnaire* by choice, who, like many of his kind, was a great talker and much given to boasting of what he was going to do. His sister was thus able to inform her masters of what was happening in the capital, and was also in a position to warn them whenever they were likely to receive a domiciliary visit.*

Soon the only tie keeping the Abbé in France was to be dissolved.

The sufferings of the royal family were only aggravated after the king's death. Hitherto the little Dauphin had been left to the care of his mother, his aunt, and his sister, but worse was to come. The smiles, the tears, the prattle of a little child had helped to brighten the imprisonment of the royal family ; now even this source of consolation was to be taken from them. Madame Royale tells in her memoirs what a cruel fate her little brother had to endure :

“ On July 3rd (1793) a decree from the *Convention* was read to us which ordered my brother to be taken from us and lodged in the strongest tower of the Temple. Hardly had he heard this sentence when he flung himself screaming into my mother's arms and pleading not to be separated from her. My mother, for her part, was quite

* Many priests owed their safety to the peasantry. A poor farm servant named Catherine Delort gave shelter to a clerical outlaw in her mother's cottage at Saint-Silvain ; the fact was discovered, and all three were guillotined. Another brave creature, Jeanne Claude by name, belonging to a village in the Jura mountains, used to fetch a priest to administer the Last Sacraments to the dying. She also acted as grave-digger on occasion. So highly did the Bishop of Friburg esteem her, that he gave her permission to carry the Host on her person when it was necessary to do so.

crushed by this cruel order ; she would not give up my brother, and tried to cover the little bed on which she had laid him with her body and thus keep him from the municipal guards. The latter determined to get possession of him, threatened to use force and to send for help. My mother told them that they would have to kill her if they wanted to take her child. An hour was spent in resistance on her part, in cursing, swearing, and threats on the part of the municipal guards ; in tears and in struggles from all of us. At last they threatened to kill both my brother and myself, so my mother had to give in for our sake. My aunt and I dressed him, for my mother's strength was exhausted. When he was dressed she took him and gave him in charge of the municipal guards, bathing him with her tears, for she foresaw that she would never see him again. The poor little thing kissed us all most affectionately and went out sobbing with the municipal guards. My mother begged them to ask the council to allow her to see her son from time to time, if it were only at mealtime ; they promised to do so. She was quite crushed by this separation, but her distress was complete when she learnt that Simon, the cobbler whom she had seen when he was in the municipal guards, had been charged to take care of her unhappy child. She continually asked to be allowed to see him, but could not obtain her wish ; my brother, for his part, wept without ceasing for several days and asked in piteous tones to be allowed to see us. . . ."

With this little child departed the last ray of the pale sunshine which had hitherto illumined their dark prison. Mme. Elisabeth's letters written about this time contain frequent allusions to the child she loved so dearly. In one of these notes written in lemon-juice, she says :

"Give this note to *Fidèle** from us. Tell him—my sister wishes you also to know—that we see the *petit* every day through the window of the staircase leading to the *garde-robe*."

Although the two events which the queen had dreaded most had come to pass, and although she herself had nothing to hope for, news from the world outside still had power to interest her. But communication with her friends had lately been rendered still more difficult owing to the imprudence of the royal prisoners. The previous month of June had been marked by a very painful scene in their prison. The princesses, realising, perhaps, that the next few months must see their fate decided, had been taking fewer precautions to avoid discovery while writing their letters. Mme. Tison, the wife of Marie-Antoinette's gaoler, discovered a drop of sealing-wax on one of the candlesticks in Mme. Elisabeth's room; on relating her discovery to her husband, who, unlike Toulon and Turgy, had resisted Marie-Antoinette's fascination, he, by dint of blows and threats, obliged her to go to one of the commissaries and accuse the unhappy queen and her sister of corresponding with the enemies of France. No sooner had she given her evidence than she was seized with an agony of remorse. Hurrying back to the prison, she flung herself at the queen's feet and, with a voice choked with sobs, cried: "Madame, forgive me, forgive me! I have just helped to condemn you and Mme. Elisabeth to death!"

Marie-Antoinette, dreading the effect of this confession

* *Fidèle* was the name given by the royal family to Toulon, one of the commissaries at the Temple, a Southerner by birth, in whom Marie-Antoinette placed great confidence.



THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING OF FRANCE IS FORCED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL TO GIVE EVIDENCE AGAINST HER OWN MOTHER, THE QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE. AUG. 13TH, 1793
From an old German print

upon the municipal guards who were present, begged her to calm herself. Mme. Tison redoubled her cries and groans on beholding Turgu, who entered the room that moment carrying the prisoners' dinner. On hearing her prayers for pardon, Turgu, who, for his share in the prisoners' secret correspondence, had cause to tremble for his own safety, said to the queen: "She has done me no harm; and if she had, I would forgive her."

Even this assurance of forgiveness was powerless to calm the wretched woman, who had of late been showing signs of mental trouble. She fell into a fit of convulsions, was taken to her own room, where eight men had to hold her down on her bed, and shortly afterwards was removed, a raving lunatic, to the Hôtel Dieu. Luckily for Turgu, the commissary who had taken down Mme. Tison's evidence, a chemist of the name of Follope, who secretly sympathised with the royal widow and her family, persuaded his colleagues that the events of the last few months had unhinged Mme. Tison's mind, and so got them to tear up her statement. Nevertheless, this incident had redoubled the vigilance of the commissaries, and the letters between the prisoners and their friends became necessarily less frequent. Turgu received fresh instructions as to signs to be employed when in the prisoner's presence:

"Has a truce been concluded? Turn up your collar. Are we expected on the frontier? Thrust your right hand into your coat. . . Are the Spanish troops trying to make a junction with the *Nantais*? Rub your eyebrows. Do you think that we shall be here in August? Blow your nose without turning away your head. . . . Ask

Fidèle if he has had news of *Produse*.* If he has had good news, put your napkin under your right arm ; if he has heard nothing, under your left. Tell him that we fear that the denunciation may have caused him some annoyance. Beg him to tell us as soon as he has news of *Produse*. . . . Be careful to take possession of all the paper stoppers (of the wine and other bottles) whenever you see me blow my nose on leaving the room. If you run any danger while executing my commands, acquaint me of the fact by changing your napkin from one hand to the other. . . . If the Swiss declare war, put your finger under your chin. Are the *Nantais* at Orleans ? put two fingers when they are there. Do not fear to make use of the left hand ; we prefer to know the truth. What has become of the English fleet ? Have any well-known people been executed, as report has it ? How are Mme. de S——† and my Abbé ? Tell Mme. de S—— that you have had news of somebody (the Abbé Edgeworth) who, like myself, knows how to appreciate faithful friends. It is with bitter regret that I see myself bereft of my last remaining friend. . . . What are my brothers doing ? ”

Monsieur, or the Regent, as he now called himself after having assumed the command of an army of six thousand *émigrés* and joined the Prussian army, had seen his entry into France arrested by the victory of Valmy. He was at Hamm in Westphalia, having left Schönbornlust in December, 1792, when he learnt of the death of his unhappy brother, Louis XVI. Comte Fersen relates the manner in which some of the *émigrés* behaved on hearing of the king's execution. “ The *émigrés*,” says he, “ are almost indifferent ; some even went to the play immediately after learning the news ! ” It was these same

* *Produse*, name given to the Prince de Condé in this secret correspondence.

† Mme. de Sérent, wife of the Comte de Sérent, a clever and a good man who filled the post of tutor to the Ducs d'Angoulême and de Berri.

émigrés who now began to make the Regent's life almost unbearable owing to their continual demands for money ; this they usually obtained, thanks to the flattery which they knew so well how to apply. No one can feel pity for the man of whom Mlle. de Condé said :

“ I blame him for his underhand dealings, for the mean intrigues in which he seems to take pleasure, and for the parody of fictitious royalty which he countenances when the empty prestige of outward display takes the place of reality. . . . ”

In the month of July, 1793, a decree was issued ordering all the convents in France to be cleared of their occupants. Hitherto but few nuns had availed themselves of the permission to leave their houses ; those who did return to the world soon sighed for the quiet life of the convent. Hunger did more to empty the convents than any of the decrees pronounced by the *tribunal révolutionnaire*. The Carmelite nuns in the rue Chapon, Paris, were reduced to living upon potatoes ; when these were no longer to be had, the poor creatures returned to their homes—in many cases no better provided with provender than the shelter they had just left. When the decree of July, 1793, was read in one or two convents the nuns, unable to buy plain clothes in which to return to their families, had to wander out into the wide world still clad in the blue, black, brown or white costume of their order. Mlle. Rose de Saint-Hubert, a nobly-born nun of twenty years of age, was allowed to remain as school-teacher at Fontévrault when that abbey was closed ; the mother-abbess, Mme. Gillette de Gondrin de Pardaillon d'Antin, a member of an old French family, fled dressed as a poor

farm servant to Paris, where she was picked up in the street and carried dying of hunger to the Hôtel Dieu, and here she expired without recovering consciousness.

The king's aunts in Rome were particularly kind to the nuns who sought shelter there. Genoa and Civita-Vecchia were invaded by a numerous band of nuns begging for food and clothes. The name of the Bishop of Wurzburg and Bamberg, Friedrich von Erthal, stands out in the history of the Emigration as that of a true Christian; this noble man denied himself in every way, gave up his own bed and slept on a plank, and lived upon the plainest food in order to be able to give more to the poor French clergy. His brother, however, the Archbishop-Elector of Mayence, gave his money to his two mistresses, Mmes. de Foret and de Condenhoven, the former an *émigrette*, as did the Bishop of Passau, who proudly introduced his mistress, the Comtesse de Guilsberg, at those princely entertainments at which he allowed the more aristocratic *émigrés* to be present.

The fate of some of the tonsured *émigrés* was strangely dissimilar. The Cardinal de Bernis,* for some time the *mignon* of Mme. de Pompadour, and christened *Babet la bouquetière* by Voltaire on account of his talent for writing light poetry, lived in Rome as the king's ambassador until the guillotine deprived that king of his head; the

* Bernis, François Joachim de Pierres de (1715-1794), of a noble but impoverished family, entered the *Académie française* at the early age of twenty-four years, owing to the influence of his friends. Cardinal Fleury, who was an honest man and had refrained from amassing a fortune in his sacred profession, refused to patronise Bernis. After Fleury's death Bernis was successively made ambassador to Venice, Archbishop of Albi, and ambassador to Rome. It was said that the Chevalier d'Azara, who patronised the fine arts, obtained a pension for him from the Spanish government during the Revolution.

cardinal's own fortune enabled him to keep twenty lacqueys and to dine two hundred guests on occasion.

The Bishop of Dijon, Desmoutiers de Mérinville, was as poor as the Cardinal was rich, owing to the fact that he had been obliged to flee from France with scarcely enough clothes to keep him warm.

The Pope was anxious to shift from his own shoulders the task of housing the poor refugees, and hinted to the Italian monks that their monasteries were by no means full, and that it was their duty to shelter their brethren in religion, to which he received a reply to the effect that "convents were not hospitals for decrepit old men."

Pius VI.'s liberalities were not over large: M. Forneron relates that the Abbés Légier and Gontier each received one *livre*, while the magnificent sum of five *livres* was doled out to the Abbé Marignanne. In bitterness of spirit wrote the Bishop of Glandève, Monseigneur Hachette-Desportes, then eighty-five years of age: "For the last six weeks I have been living upon charity." *

It is strange that such true republicans at heart as the Bishop of Saint-Pol and the Abbés Ranlin and de Fontenilles incurred the anger of the revolutionists and were forced to emigrate, so touching was their conduct towards the republican troops when the latter were

* Some of the royalists had to bear much more. During the bombardment of Maëstricht by the republican troops in 1793, Mmes. de Beaufort and de Mérode—the latter had two helpless infants with her—had to hide in a cellar where the Grand-Vicar of Soissons came to see them every day. Here they passed the time not spent in prayer in watching the smoke of the bursting bombs through a grating. The Cardinal de Montmorency went from cellar to cellar comforting the sick, blessing the dying, and succouring his unfortunate compatriots in every way which lay in his power. *diary writer*

Mme. de Beaufort's husband, Henri, was an *historian* of some fame; he died in Maëstricht in 1795.

in straits. The Bishop of Sainte-Pol, for instance, gave from his own meagre purse and persuaded others to give money to the French republican soldiers who had been taken prisoner by the allied sovereigns ; and the Abbés Ranlin and de Fontenilles, while in exile in Franconia, stripped their shirts off their own backs in order to clothe some French prisoners. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, Champion de Cicé, who was so unjustly treated by the royalists, having learnt, while in Bohemia, that two villages in his diocese had been devastated by a hurricane, gave his last remaining gold pieces towards the relief of the peasants. After two years spent in exile, Champion de Cicé in 1794 wrote to Cardinal de Bernis, the Cræsus of the clerical *émigrés*, telling him how the royalists had refused to help him, and begging for a shelter in Rome ; to this request de Bernis replied that his presence was not required in the Holy City. With righteous indignation, Champion de Cicé wrote to the Pope protesting against the injustice of a handful of clerics who wished to shut the gates of Rome in his face. But the holy Father in his reply said : " His Holiness has no desire to interfere with the private affairs of your *confrères*." Fortunately the Bishop of Luçon was able to come to the aid of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, and gave him shelter until 1802, when he returned to France and was made Archbishop of Aix.

Those royalists, clergy or nobility, who still concerned themselves in the fate of Marie-Antoinette and her children, devised various plots during the year 1793 ; but these plots, owing to the difficulty of saving all four members of the royal family together, came to nothing.

MARIE-ANTOINETTE EXECUTED 163

The mother might have been saved alone, but, as she herself said on October 6th, only ten days before mounting the scaffold :

“ I cannot consent to abandon my son ; I could never enjoy anything without my children. I regret nothing ! ”

Marie-Antoinette was guillotined October 16th, 1793. The day before her execution she was visited by a priest who had taken the oath of fealty to the Republic ; she, however, refused to listen or to make her last confession to him. Shortly before starting for the scaffold, knowing that the Abbé Emery,* father-superior of Saint-Sulpice, occupied a cell exactly opposite her own, she knelt at her window and received absolution from him.

In the following month the *Commune* remembered that the king's sister “ still lived to burden the earth with her crimes,” as the ultra-revolutionists were pleased to put it. Prudhomme† in his “ *Révolutions de Paris* ” said of her in November, 1793 :

“ Fat Elisabeth has not yet adopted the modest demeanour which befits misfortune. Having no longer any confessor or chaplain, she, like her brother, reads most diligently the breviary which used to be read to her family at such great expense to the nation. She has lately procured one for herself ; it is in four parts. She has likewise purchased a little stock of books representing the value of about fifteen or twenty pairs of stays ; nearly all the books are works of devotion. One would like to see in her a little more of that Christian humility of which

* Some historians say the *curé* of Saint-Marguerite.

† Prudhomme, Louis (1752-1830), a revolutionary turncoat. Notwithstanding his “ *Révolutions de Paris* ” he was thrown into prison in 1793. In 1798 he wrote a work called “ *Les Crimes de la Révolution.* ” He afterwards set up as a bookseller and edited several celebrated books.

she reads examples in the said books. Her niece copies her in everything. . . .”

When Hébert, in an inflammatory speech worthy of the *Père Duchesne* and his voluble spouse, demanded the head of the late king's sister, Robespierre mounted into the tribune and defended her to the best of his ability. But the Incorruptible was already beginning to lose his hold over the minds of his *confrères*: his protests were argued down. However, the Abbé's penitent was not to perish for some months.

During November, 1793, the *Commune* ordered all places of worship to be closed, made the clergy responsible for any rioting which might occur in the capital, and threatened with imprisonment any persons who dared to request to be allowed to worship in public. It was on this occasion that Robespierre blamed the persecutions to which the clergy were exposed, for which indeed their ambition was partly responsible, and said: “Priests have been denounced for saying mass; if they are forbidden to do so, they will only say it all the more. He who wishes to prevent them saying mass is a greater fanatic than he who says mass.” He added that he considered atheism as an aristocratic fad, and, as a true disciple of Voltaire and Rousseau, declared that “if God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him.”

Much that is misleading has been written about Robespierre and Danton. It was the latter who made a wonderful speech in defence of the *clergé assermenté*, in the course of which he uttered the famous remark: “When priests are good men, they are better than anybody



Bertonnier, delt.

DANTON

BORN AT ARCIS-SUR-AUBE, 1759, GUILLOTINED IN PARIS, 1796

else ! ” Danton and Robespierre were quite as much in earnest over their religious principles as Oliver Cromwell and Praise-God Barebones. If Robespierre, Danton, and Camille Desmoulins were the creators of the Revolution, it can safely be said that Hébert, Marat, Carrier, Ancharsis Cloots and Philippe Egalité, with their cruelty and fanaticism, were its evil geniuses.

In the previous year Danton had declared that he looked upon the desire to prevent the people practising whatever religion they preferred as a crime of *lèse-nation*, “ for,” said he, “ their religion is a source of some consolation to them.” * This protest came too late : the month of October, 1793, saw the promulgation of a decree by which the sum of 100 *francs* was to be paid to anybody denouncing a priest ; death was the penalty for sheltering one, and execution within twenty-four hours awaited any priest who was captured. Any priest could be deported at the request of twenty citizens, and deportation meant deprivations of all sorts, sickness, and death. Conamana and Sinnamari in French Guiana were chosen as suitable residences for three hundred and twenty-eight priests who were sentenced to deportation, but only one hundred and forty-eight reached their destination alive, owing to the quality of the food supplied to them during the voyage. With their bodies covered with vermin, racked with fevers, these Jesuit, Jansenist, and Gallican

* Robespierre was not always consistent. Having discovered that a *ci-devant aristocrate* of the name of Hussé was lodging ten nuns in her house in Passy, where a priest was suspected of saying mass, he caused an inquiry to be made which revealed the facts that the *femme* Hussé had lately killed a pig and that her cellar contained seven bushels of dried beans—far too big a store of provisions for her to consume all by herself. History does not say what became of the nuns, the pig, the beans, or the *ci-devant aristocrate*

priests, priests who had taken the oath of fealty to the Republic and priests who had refused to do so, began to quarrel among themselves almost before they had landed. When death came to cut short their sufferings, the survivors quarrelled over the poor possessions of their dead brethren in Christ. M. Forneron tells of one priest who had five watches in his possession. Nearly all died of fever or privations. Several nuns were likewise deported to French Guiana, where they, as ever is their custom, devoted themselves to the relief of suffering humanity. A certain notary of Sillé-le-Guillaume managed to save several priests whose deportation he had been ordered to superintend ; while two hundred and seventy-nine *curés* were being taken to Nantes, where they were to be shipped to French Guiana, the notary gave half of their number 100 *livres* each and then let them escape.

Not all the priests who were deported were sent to French colonies. The Abbé Carron, for instance, was deported to Jersey in 1792, where he founded schools, a library, and a dispensary for his compatriots. The story of the Abbé's life is a romantic one. Gui Toussaint Julien Carron was born in 1760, and entered his sacred profession at the early age of thirteen. When he was twenty-nine years of age he opened a cloth manufactory in his native town of Rennes, where two thousand poor people found employment. He also instituted a reformatory for females. Some friends of one of the inmates of this reformatory determined to murder the good Abbé, and on the plea that somebody was dying, persuaded him to go one night to a lonely hovel. As he entered the room, one of the would-be assassins sprang from under the bed where

he had been hiding and advanced towards him, brandishing a knife ; “ but,” says the Abbé’s biographer, “ before he could touch the holy man, the Finger of God stretched him dead at the feet of his friend’s benefactor.”

On escaping to London, the Abbé Carron founded more schools in which ex-nuns and the better educated *émigrées* taught and prepared little orphan girls to earn their living. It was the Abbé’s custom while in London to go clad in his black cassock to the Protestant churches to beg for his poor. On one occasion he received a box on the ear from a scandalised Protestant. “ I will keep the blow for myself,” said he, with an indulgent smile ; “ but what will you give me for my poor ? ” *

The month of November, 1793, witnessed some very lively incidents in the hall of the *Convention*. On the 6th, Danton demanded that the *Assemblée* should cease to be the scene of irreligious disturbances such as had recently been witnessed. Ten days later a still more extraordinary scene was enacted. A letter had just been read from a priest requesting the *Assemblée* to grant him a pension which would enable him “ to free himself from the life of hypocrisy which had been his ever since he had entered the Church,” when the door of the hall in which the *Assemblée* held its meetings was thrown open and the Bishop of Paris, Monseigneur Gobel, appeared, accompanied by his vicars. Having announced his intention of resigning his sacred post, he returned his cross and ring to the *Convention*, from whom he had received them.

* On the return to France of the Bourbons, the Abbé Carron was placed at the head of the Institut Marie-Thérèse which was founded for the education of young girls who had lost their fortunes during the Revolution.

His example was followed by the Bishops of Limoges and Evreux,* by the *curés* of Villers, Sermaize, Gay Vernon, and many other places. Of all the ecclesiastics present, the proclaimer of the Republic, the celebrated Abbé Grégoire, alone had the courage to assert that he intended to keep his post as Bishop of Blois and do his best for his little flock. As a result of the above scene the Bishop of Paris was imprisoned, condemned to death, and guillotined on April 10th of the following year.

A few days after Gobel's dramatic announcement the history of the Revolution was stained by a most absurd and disgusting scene. The cathedral of Notre Dame was profaned by the presence of an actress named La Maillard, who was placed half naked on a throne on the high altar and acclaimed as the Goddess of Reason. Several churches in Paris that day were desecrated by similar scenes ; at Saint-Eustache, for instance, the crowd danced, sang, and drank to their hearts' content.

George Henry Lewes says in his *Life of Robespierre* :

"The Feast of Reason may be taken as the extreme point of revolutionary madness : from that moment the reaction began."

* Lindet, Robert Thomas (1743-1823), as *curé* of Bernay in 1789 was chosen to represent the clergy at the *Etats Généraux* ; having taken the oath of fealty to the civil constitution, he was elected Bishop of Evreux. As a member of the *Convention* he voted for the death of Louis XVI. After leaving the Church he became a member of the *Conseil des Anciens*. He defended his brother, Jean Baptiste Lindet, for his share in the Babeuf conspiracy. He was exiled from France in 1816 for having voted for the execution of Louis XVI. ; however, he was allowed to return to his native land before he died.

CHAPTER IX

Important part played by the clergy in the Revolution : The wars of La Vendée and the *Chouannerie* : The *Noyades* and the *Mitrailles* of Nantes : Some of the guillotine's victims.

THE clergy, or rather ex-members of that body, played a very important part in the French Revolution. Among some of the most prominent—and in many cases most violent—revolutionists, there stand out the names of François Chabot, regicide ; the *curé* Legris-Duval, philanthropist ; Joseph Gobel, Bishop of Paris ; Robert Thomas Lindet, Bishop of Evreux ; the Abbé Grégoire, the Saint-Vincent de Paul of the Revolution ; dom Gerle, Catherine Théot's disciple ; the Abbé Fauchet, who helped to take the Bastille but refused to vote for the king's execution ; Joseph Lebon, termed “ the rightly named ” on account of his soft heart ; the Abbé Sieyès, Robespierre's “ cunning fox ” ; the Abbé Arnoux of Aubignan, who asked to be allowed to march to the frontier with the republican troops, and did so on being assured that his cure would be restored to him on his return ; the Abbé Adrien Lamourette of the famous *Baiser Lamourette* ; Pierre Louis Manuel, who vainly tried to stop the September massacres ; those two human chameleons, Talleyrand-Périgord and Joseph Fouché, the regicide ; the Abbé Louis who

assisted at the mass celebrated on the Altar of the Fatherland erected on the Champ de Mars; the Abbé Maury of the legend of the lantern; the Abbé Dubois, who had taken an oath to poison the Comte d'Artois, but, his courage failing him, was himself poisoned by the ultra-revolutionists; the Abbé Rougier, a particular enemy of the *Chouans*; Jean Louis Soulavie, Robespierre's partisan, and many others.

The celebrated wars of La Vendée and the *Chouannerie* were fostered by the clergy; indeed, without the clergy that western portion of France, the home of loyalty, of superstition, of love for the soil, and of friendly relations between master and man, would never have risen against the Republic. The wars of La Vendée and the *Chouannerie* must not be confused; they were two distinct wars, and the Loire was the natural boundary between the fields of their operations. The wars of La Vendée were all fought on the left bank of that beautiful river, while the wars of the *Chouannerie*, which did not really begin until 1793, were waged on the right bank. Between June, 1791, to August, 1792, nine attempts at insurrection occurred. In March, 1793, a general rising, caused by a decree from the *Convention* ordering a levy of three hundred thousand troops by conscription, took place in La Vendée and several battles were fought. Victor Hugo said of this decree that "it caused the tocsin to ring in six hundred villages." Poitou and Anjou burst into revolt. The Vendéans, whose war-cry was "*Vivent les Anglais!*" (the English who had given shelter to so many *émigrés*), had several splendid soldiers in their ranks; of whom the most prominent were the Marquis de

Lescure,* a returned *émigré* with his four thousand peasants who had sworn to be cut to pieces rather than abandon the royalist cause ; the Marquis de Bonchamp† of glorious memory, who, mortally wounded outside Cholet, on his death-bed liberated five thousand republican prisoners who were about to be massacred by the royalist troops ; Gigot d'Elbée,‡ a cavalry lieutenant before the Revolution, chosen by the Vendéans to take the place of Cathelineau,§ who was a weaver by profession, and one of the bravest of the Vendéans ; Nicolas Stofflet,|| a son of the people, but devoted to the royalist cause ; the Marquis de La Rochejaquelein, and many others.

Stofflet brought twenty thousand soldiers to fight for the monarchy, Cathelineau brought ten thousand, and the Marquis de La Rochejaquelein three thousand. At first the Vendéans were victorious ; Saumur saw a great battle and a great victory for the *blancs*,¶ but at Nantes the *bleus* began to advance. The Vendéans, endowed with a religious ardour which in some cases amounted to fanaticism, when pitted against the republican troops sent to quell the insurrection, distinguished themselves by their bravery, but were often guilty of great cruelty. Haxo, a republican general, preferred to blow out his brains than to fall into the hands of the *blancs*. Throughout the wars of La Vendée the women showed themselves

* Lescure, Louis Marie, Marquis de (1766-1793), fell mortally wounded at the battle of La Tremblaye and died November 3rd, 1793.

† Bonchamp, Charles Artus, Marquis de (1759-1793).

‡ Gigot d'Elbée (1752-1794) was taken prisoner on the island of Noirmoutier and shot.

§ Cathelineau, Jacques (1759-1793), termed himself " a humble, modest peasant."

|| Stofflet, Nicolas (1751-1796), was taken prisoner and shot at Angers.

¶ The royalist troops called themselves *les blancs*, the republicans *les bleus*.

most courageous and most cruel. Mme. de La Rochejaquelein, widow of the brave Henri Verger de La Rochejaquelein * who before going to battle said to his men : " If I begin to retreat, kill me ; if I advance, follow me ; if I die, avenge my death ! " took a fiendish delight in riding her horse over the bodies of some republican soldiers, some of whom were probably still alive. Women headed the massacres of Pontivy and la Roche-Bernard. Churches where priests who had taken the oath of fealty to the new government were celebrating mass were invaded by hordes of termagants armed with brooms and sticks, who forced the clergy to flee for their lives. At Machecoul a number of viragos tortured the " intruder " (as he was called) to death by stabbing him in the face with skewers, pins, and scissors. The " intruders " were hunted through the forests of La Vendée like wild beasts and killed as such. After a scene of savage cruelty an outlawed priest, that is to say a priest who had refused to recognise the new government, would say mass in the brushwood while a couple of peasants kept watch to see that no republican troops were likely to disturb the sacred ceremony. His blessing given, the priest would tuck up his cassock, thrust his crucifix and his pistols into his belt, and march off at the head of his flock. On coming across a little chapel or a crucifix during their long marches through the dense forests these simple creatures would kneel down and repeat their rosary ; and this they would often do even when under fire. " The rosary finished," says Victor Hugo, " those who were still alive rose from their knees and flung themselves upon the enemy . . . "

* The Marquis Henri Verger de La Rochejaquelein perished at the battle of Nouaillé, in La Vendée.

A certain Antoinette Adams, named *le Chevalier Adams*, showed such bravery that the republican troops, on taking her out to be executed, shot her standing upright, instead of guillotining her, as a mark of respect for her courage. It was on the occasion of the capture of the town of la Roche-Bernard that a most horrible scene took place. The president of the *Salle du Directoire*, M. Sauveur by name, after having been forced to fasten the white cockade of the Vendéans in his hat, was led with manacled hands through the streets, after which he was beaten, cut with knives; and cruelly tortured. He begged his torturers, whom he called *mes amis*, to have pity upon him, to which they replied by ordering him to cry: "*Vive le Roi!*" but he only answered: "*Vive la République!*" Several persons interceded for him, but in vain. He was led bound to the foot of one of those beautiful stone calvaries for which La Vendée is famous. Here he fell on his knees murmuring a prayer for forgiveness for his enemies, and rose again with the cry: "*Vive la Nation!*" on his lips. Somebody shot out his left eye amid yells of delight; another shot felled him to the ground; but he rose again, only to fall once more. Dragging himself to the edge of a ditch and pressing the insignia of his profession to his lips, he cried: "Finish me off, *mes amis!* Do not prolong my sufferings! *Vive la nation!*" His request was answered by a volley of shots. A certain Gaston ordered three hundred *bleus* to be shot after they had dug their own graves: some of them were buried while still alive. A Vendean priest named Barbotin, the *curé* of Fontenay, forgetting his vows, killed an old man with his own hands.

Superstition was the magician's wand which the priest used to force the peasantry to obey his behests. One trick was to place a black cat in the tabernacle of any *prêtre jureur* (as they were usually called), which would spring out during the mass ; whereupon the peasants would cry : " The devil ! the devil ! " and flee out of the church. The weapon of fear was equally powerful ; threats of death and everlasting damnation were used when the peasantry showed resistance. They were also shown a priest whose neck bore a red mark made by a piece of string or tape being tied tightly. " This holy man was guillotined, but has now risen from the dead ! " they were told. These simple-minded creatures, shod in their clumsy wooden shoes, with scapulars fastened to their leather waistcoats and white ribbons hanging from their round black hats, usually attacked the enemy by night when they uttered blood-curdling cries. Their weapons sometimes only consisted of pikes or of the pole, fifteen feet long, called a *ferté*, which was used by the peasantry to vault over the little rivers which abound in La Vendée.

The history of the wars of the *Chouannerie* is a romantic one. The peasants of Brittany and Bas-Maine had organised themselves under the guidance of a cobbler living near Laval named Jean Cottureau, who called himself Jean Chouan ; that is to say, the *Chat-huant*, or screech-owl, whose cry he imitated when calling his followers together. His followers styled themselves *Chouans*, after their leader. Jean Cottureau's first appearance with his *Chouans* was made in 1793. His career was not a long one, for he was killed in battle in the following year, but

his supporters continued the conflict.* The chiefs gave themselves peculiar names, as, for instance, *Cœur de roy*, *Blancdamour*, *Jean le Coq*, *Branche d'or*, *Jean-Jean*, *Constant*, *Empereur*, *Vainqueur*, *la Vendée*, *la Grenade*, *Saint-Martin*, *Falisard*, and the like. At first Jean Chouan's followers, who eventually numbered five hundred thousand men, women, and children, were so timid that the mere sound made by the cannons of the republican troops made them flee. Great was their delight when, having discovered that these noises did not always mean wholesale massacres, they grew more bold and made their first capture, a fine bronze cannon dating from the time of Richelieu and adorned with a figure of the Virgin ; this cannon they baptised *Marie-Jeanne*.

At the battle of Fontenay, so disastrous to the *blancs*, *Marie-Jeanne* was taken prisoner, notwithstanding the fact that six hundred brave *Chouans* had died in a vain attempt to save their *mascotte*. "Then they recaptured Fontenay," says Victor Hugo, "in order to get possession of *Marie-Jeanne* once more. They brought her back to camp wreathed with garlands of flowers and adorned with the royal flag ; women kissed her bronze mouth as she was dragged along the rugged lanes."

When not engaged in fighting, the *Chouans* said their rosary, or, as they themselves quaintly put it : "All the day long Jean Chouan used to make us *chapeletter* !" The word *chapelet* recalls a horrible incident. These same *Chouans*, having been victorious at Machecoul,

* The *Chouans* began to diminish in number about 1796 ; in 1803 they were dispersed by Bonaparte. In 1814 and 1815 a handful of royalists calling themselves *Chouans* tried to revive the old war, but were easily routed by General Lamarque.

chained their prisoners in batches of thirty, called a *chapelet*. Each day saw the execution of a *chapelet*. The victims were made to stand by an open ditch and were shot one after the other. When food was scarce the *Chouans* said their rosary in order to forget their hunger.

So deep lay the roots of love of their native village in the hearts of these strange folk, that they shed tears when they could no longer see in the blue distance the spire of the church in which they had been baptised and taken their First Communion. An old song called "La Chanson de la Dérobée" is still sung in Brittany :

" Je suis natif du Finistère,
A Saint-Pol j'ai reçu le jour :
Mon pays est l' plus beau d'la terre,
Mon clocher l' plus joli d' alentour. . . .
Que j'aime ma bruyère,
Et mon clocher à jour ! "

But there was another song sung by the *Chouans*, a song of vengeance and of cruelty, said to date from the time of King Arthur and his Round Table :

" Heart for eye, head for arm, father for mother, mother for daughter,
stallion for mare, mule for ass, blood for tears, flame for sweat."

There was a decided streak of lawlessness among these *Chouans*, and it manifested itself in a love of plunder.

Strange to say, the *émigrés* were not popular with the *Chouans*. Priests who had dared to avail themselves of their newly acquired liberty to marry were, of course, anathema to these staunch Catholics. Family affection counted for nothing in those days. A Vendean chief of the name of Joly, a watchmaker by trade, had a son in

the republican army, in whose ranks more than one *ci-devant aristocrate* (as, for instance, the Marquis de Dampierre) fought. During an encounter between *blancs* and *bleus* the father took his son prisoner and shot him dead with his own pistol. The *blancs*, however, were quite capable of appreciating courage in their adversaries, as in the case of the republican ensign-bearer, Fesque, who allowed himself to be cut to pieces rather than let go his hold of the tricolour flag.

The *Chouans* were not the only soldiers who were cruel ; at first the *bleus* were inclined to be merciful towards their prisoners, but this did not last. On leaving Paris in April, 1793, Santerre's volunteers received the password from the *Commune* of Paris : " No mercy ! " a reply to the royalists' battle-cry : " No quarter ! " So well did Gigot d'Elbée know this fact that when he was taken prisoner by General Turreau, and was asked by that officer, " If we were in your power, what would you do to us ? " he replied, " I should do what you are going to do to me ! " He was immediately shot.

The *Convention* likewise decreed that anybody helping a rebel to escape should suffer the penalty of death. Notwithstanding this command, a republican chief at La Cailleterie d'Astillé having noticed a wounded Vendean dragging himself along the ground towards some brushwood, called to his men : " Go on ! I will see to this matter ! " As soon as the troops were out of sight, he discharged his pistol in the air and left the wounded soldier to crawl back to his friends.

Very different was the conduct of General Lemoine, who, on discovering that one of his prisoners could paint,

invited him to dine with him and spend the night under his roof, for which kindness the artist was to paint the republican general's portrait ; the picture was finished on the morrow, when the painter was taken out, not to be released, but to be shot. Perhaps the portrait was not sufficiently flattering !

Among the *bleus'* victims were two boys, both under sixteen years of age, who perished in spite of the efforts to save their lives made by the *conventionnel* Blad, who had tried to persuade the *Convention* to pardon all offenders under that age ; however, Blad was able to obtain a pardon for the little Baron de Courcy, who was only thirteen years of age. One of the oldest victims of the Revolution was M. de Salignac-Fénélon, a most noble priest and great-nephew of that splendid Frenchman Fénélon. M. de Salignac-Fénélon had been father-confessor to Marie-Leczinska, and had founded an institution for befriending the poor little chimney-sweeps, mostly Savoyards, of Paris. Notwithstanding the fact that a petition for his pardon was signed by nearly all the Savoyards in the capital, the old man, then eighty years of age, after having spent his whole life in doing good to his fellow-creatures, was guillotined.

The republican chiefs sent word to the *Convention* that there was " great danger in allowing priests who had not taken the oath to say mass." General Vimeux had a special spite against the priesthood. He boasts in a report that he had not allowed a single priest to escape from the department of La Sarthe ; he goes on to say that an enormous number of priests had been executed, and that he is thankful to be able to report that a group

of forty or fifty persons of both sexes had lately been caught saying their prayers in a barn at Plouneven. When it was discovered that they had church ornaments in their possession, twenty-nine arrests were made. Another of Vimeux's reports runs as follows : " One priest escaped ; but the God, for whose glory these monsters fanaticise the people, struck him with His sword ; he died on reaching his brother's house." He waxes indignant over the conduct of some of the Vendéans : " When a priest is arrested, all his *ci-devant* parishioners, men, women, and children, accompany him to the outskirts of his parish, tearing their hair and striking their breasts." Words cannot express his fury on finding that one village has been so wicked as to conceal the holy vessels belonging to the parish church, together with six registers containing sundry certificates of baptisms and marriages bearing the signature of Martin, *curé catholique*.

Strange to say, it was a priest who did much harm to the royalist cause by betraying Nicolas Stofflet, one of the bravest of the Vendéans. The name of that priest was Bernier. Napoleon knew him in after years, and said of him : " I know he is a villain, but I need his co-operation." Hoche said of him : " He is just the sort of priest we want here. I think that the government might on occasion count upon his ambition."

Alexandre Bernier, born in 1764, was *curé* of a church in Angers when the Revolution broke out. In 1790 he refused to take the oath of fealty to the civil constitution of the clergy, and three years later joined the Vendéans, whose confidence he won completely, and who soon learnt to appreciate his talents. Bernier, however, was a born

traitor, and he determined to turn his knowledge of the Vendéans' plans and strategy to good account. He offered his services to the *bleus*, and they were accepted. On February 23rd, 1796, the Abbé, under the pretext that he had some very important news to communicate to him, persuaded Stofflet to meet him after nightfall at the farmhouse of La Saugrenière. When the latter appeared at the place of meeting he found Bernier surrounded by a group of republican soldiers. He was immediately arrested, and taken to Angers, where he was shot.

History does not say what reward the Abbé Bernier received for this act of treachery. His wonderful cleverness enabled him to persuade the royalists that he was innocent of any share in the arrest of Stofflet. In 1799 he decided to help Napoleon to pacify La Vendée, and by his assurances that General Bonaparte was working in the interest of the Bourbons, he persuaded the Vendéans to submit to the *Directoire*. For this service Napoleon made him Bishop of Orleans and gave him the sum of 24,000 *francs*.

The Vendéans' worst enemy was Carrier,* who, when summoned to Paris by the *Convention* to account for his atrocious cruelty at Nantes, uttered the famous accusation: "Everybody here is guilty, everybody and everything, even to the president's bell!"

Carrier began his *noyades* † towards the end of 1792; opinions are divided as to whether he really presided at them in person. One thing, however, is certain, and that is that the *noyades* and the *mitrillades* of Nantes were con-

* Carrier, Jean Baptiste, *conventionnel*, perished on the scaffold 1794.

† The *noyades* were frequently called *mariages républicains*.

ceived by this fiend in order to empty the crowded prisons of that town and save himself the trouble of having to feed several hundred fever-stricken prisoners. The *mitrillades* took place on the Place du Bouffay. The victims were tied to the trees with which the square was adorned in those days and were then shot. The *noyades* were infinitely more horrible: the prisoners were bound, men and women together, and flung headlong into boats fitted with plugs. These were then tugged into the middle of the Loire, the plugs removed, and the boats, laden with their cargo of screaming, struggling victims, disappeared beneath the waters of the river.

On another occasion Carrier ordered his troops to massacre several hundred Vendean peasants who had been besieged in the *château* of Aux, and forced to surrender to the *bleus*. Lieutenant Hugo, the father of the celebrated author and a distinguished officer in the republican army, forbade his men to obey this inhuman command, whereupon Carrier repeated his orders, adding that he would have Hugo himself shot for daring to incite his troops to disobedience. But Hugo, nothing daunted, on seeing his men about to obey Carrier, cried to them: "You are no longer my soldiers: you are Carrier's executioners!" This speech saved the lives of the Vendéans.

It has been said in excuse of Carrier that he was a royalist in disguise and that he perpetrated these atrocious crimes in order to make the Republic unpopular. Such an excuse, even in these days of excuses for every crime, entirely fails to convince. Nevertheless Carrier was condemned to death, December 16th, 1794, 'or having ordered

children of thirteen and fourteen years of age to be shot, and for having planned and executed the *noyades* of Nantes with counter-revolutionary intentions.

Carrier was not alone in his cruelty. Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac,* regicide, wrote :

“ The soldiers put to death whomsoever they wished, pillaged when they wished to do so ; no efforts were made to moderate or repress their thirst for blood and pillage.”

Westermann,† Danton’s friend, had received the following order from the *Convention* : “ The forests are to be cut down, the rebels’ dens destroyed, the crops burnt and the cattle seized.” He did more, as he himself wrote : “ I have crushed infants under the horses’ hoofs, massacred women who will never again give birth to brigands. I have not a single prisoner on my conscience. . . .”

Those who lived through those horrible times never forgot them. The daughter of Mallet du Pan,‡ who had tried in vain to stop Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette on the downward path, spoke in after years of how, when

* Barère de Vieuzac, Bertrand (1755-1841), began life as a lawyer at Toulouse, then became a politician and president of the *Convention*, when, as the *citoyen* Barère, he voted for the death of Louis XVI. He played an active part on the 9th *Thermidor* ; having been outlawed, he was fortunate enough to escape over the frontier. He returned to France after the amnesty of the 18th *Brumaire* and lived a more or less retired life. On the return of the Bourbons he was again exiled as a regicide. He died in Brussels.

† Westermann, Joseph (1751-1794), a native of Alsace, who, on adopting the cause of the new-born Republic, came up to Paris, where he became intimate with Danton. He was nominated adjutant-general, and in this capacity was sent to aid Dumouriez in Argonne, in Belgium. Implicated in that traitor’s conspiracy, he managed to escape for the time being. As a general in La Vendée he was first successful, but was afterwards beaten by the *blancs* at Beaupréau, Laval, Granville, and Bauge. His friendship with Danton cost him his life.

‡ Mallet du Pan emigrated in 1792.

a little girl, sitting on a stool at her mother's feet, on still summer evenings she used to hear the drums rolling in the distance and the cries of the rabble as the victims' heads were carried along the streets of Paris on pikes and bayonets. She only *heard*, but how much more did those who *saw* suffer ? A little school-boy at the College of Douai was, by order of Collot d'Herbois, placed under the guillotine while his father, his mother, and his brother were executed ; in this awful place he was drenched by the blood of those whom he loved best on earth. It is not to be wondered at that he suffered from convulsions during the rest of his life.

Whole families were exterminated by the guillotine. Fourteen male members of the de Jallay family, and five members of the de Chevières family perished on the scaffold. Mme. de Luzy lost her husband through prison-fever, while her two brothers, one sister, and a niece were all guillotined. A paper still exists bearing the signature of Fouquier-Tinville,* whose victims ranged from Marie-Antoinette to Danton, his former protector ; it is the order for the execution of the Maréchale de Lévis and her two daughters, the Comtesses de Béranger and de Vintimille, and it runs thus :

“ Veuve Lévis, âgée de cinquante ans ; Henriette Lévis, femme Béranger, vingt-sept ans ; Gabrielle Lévis, femme Duluc, vingt-huit ans.”

Who would recognise in the *veuve* Lévis and the *femmes* Béranger and Duluc three members of one of the oldest families in France ?

* Fouquier-Tinville, public prosecutor to the *tribunal révolutionnaire*, seconded Robespierre on many occasions ; he perished on the scaffold in 1795.

Fortunately the republican chiefs were not all equally cruel, and on several occasions republican soldiers helped *aristocrates* to escape. Some good *citoyennes* of Vannes, touched by the sufferings of several unhappy prisoners who were expected to thrive upon four ounces of millet a day, lent them mattresses upon which to rest their fever-racked bodies while waiting their turn to be guillotined. The turnkey of the prison had determined to save the lives of three of his prisoners, and he therefore hid them under the mattresses. When the women came to fetch their property, the turnkey tried to prevent them, giving as his excuse that more prisoners were expected. However, the women only boxed his ears and tried to drag the mattresses out of the cell. Their frantic struggles to recover their property revealed the fact that three pale, quivering prisoners were crouching beneath the pile of mattresses. The leader, murmuring a few words in Breton to her companions, let the bundle of mattresses fall back again and left the cell without another word.

It was not until Hoche, having been sent to pacify La Vendée, had executed Stofflet and Charette * in 1796 that peace was finally established in that part of France, and even then small attempts at insurrection took place from time to time until 1799.

* Charette, François Athenase Charette de la Contrie (1763-1796), placed himself at the head of the peasants of Machecoul, joined forces with Cathelineau, and took part in the sieges of Nantes and Luçon. He and his peasants left the army in consequence of disputes with other royalist chiefs. He soon fell an easy prey to the republican troops and was taken prisoner in the marshes near La Jaunaye; he was shot March, 1796.

CHAPTER X

The Abbé learns of the death of Mme. Elisabeth : He determines to leave France as soon as possible : He reaches England after many adventures : He is requested to go on a mission to Blankenburg : He makes his preparations to do so : Unseemly struggles of Louis XVIII. and Francis II. of Germany to obtain possession of Madame Royale : Project of a marriage for Madame Royale : The *émigrés* continue to return to France : The Abbé goes to Blankenburg, where Louis XVIII. requests him to remain as his chaplain.

IN the month of May, 1794, the Abbé Edgeworth, who was still in hiding at Bayeux, learnt of the death of Mme. Elisabeth, the princess for whose sake he had remained in France exposed to denunciation and execution. Mme. de Genlis relates in her memoirs that no sooner had the princess's head fallen under the knife of the guillotine than the Place Louis XV. became filled with the scent of roses. As the years went by, many of those who had slighted and even disliked her during her lifetime began to talk of her as if she had been a veritable saint. Shortly before her removal to the prison of the Temple, as if she had had a premonition of what was about to happen, she had intrusted to the Abbé Edgeworth some important messages for her favourite brother Charles, to be delivered whenever he should have the opportunity to do so. It was with inexpressible grief that the Abbé in his hiding-place at Bayeux listened to the details of her imprisonment and last moments. A true friendship

had existed between him and the princess, a friendship which months of separation had been powerless to destroy. Now that the ties which bound him to France were dissolved by death, the Abbé determined to leave his adopted country as soon as possible and to go to Edinburgh, where the Comte d'Artois was then living in constant fear of his creditors, unable to leave the palace of Holyrood during the daytime, and hourly expecting to be thrown into a less luxurious prison.

The Baron de La Lézardière also determined to leave France with his friend, the Abbé. By putting their money together, these two would-be *émigrés* managed to purchase a boat in which they intended to cross the Channel. Long weeks and months passed while waiting for an opportunity to escape. The year 1794 closed and 1795 passed before anything had been accomplished. During the winter of 1795-96 the Baron de La Lézardière learnt that another of his sons had been captured by the republican troops, whereupon the poor old man declared that he could not think of leaving France until his son's fate was decided.

During the spring of 1796 the royalist army, under the command of the Comte de Frotté,* landed on the little island of Saint-Marcouf, on the coast of Normandy, then occupied by English troops. The Abbé, who knew the Comte de Frotté, obtained a promise that he and his servant Louis Bousset should be taken over to

* Frotté, Louis, Comte de (1755-1800), emigrated in 1792, but returned to France in 1795, when he placed himself at the head of a body of *Chouans*. Napoleon hated the count, and in 1800 placed a price upon his head. Frotté offered to treat with Napoleon after Cadoudal's defeat, whereupon Napoleon promised to pardon him. However, when once Frotté was in his power, he had him tried by court-martial and executed.

the island as soon as an opportunity occurred. When the day came, the Abbé, by an unfortunate misunderstanding, arrived on the coast too late to find the boat which had been sent to meet the refugees. Four or five days were spent in suspense, and then signals were exchanged and another boat was sent to fetch the Abbé and his servant. This time the refugees were waiting on the shore ready to embark. Aided by three sailors, Bousset, although in danger of drowning, as he did not know how to swim, waded laden with his master's goods and chattels into the water, which was up to his chin, and thus managed to reach the sloop. He then returned to fetch the Abbé. The tide was rapidly going down when the latter, having seen all his humble possessions safely on board, prepared to wade out to the vessel ; but as the tide descended the boat drifted farther away. After making frantic efforts to reach the sloop and wading as far into the water as they dared, the unfortunate Abbé and his servant were forced to return to the shore. With heavy hearts they crept back to the neighbouring *château* where they had sheltered while waiting for the sloop. They were in hourly dread of being taken prisoners by some of the patrols, who, in consequence of several attempts on the part of well-known *Chouan* chiefs to leave France, had received orders to watch the coast most carefully.

On the next day the Abbé, having received intimation that a boat would meet him at a place about three leagues distant from his hiding-place, left the *château* on foot and went with his servant to the place appointed. Here he found ten or twelve other persons waiting to be taken over to the island of Saint-Marcouf. As the boat did not appear

the unfortunate fugitives passed the night lying in the reeds by the sea-shore. When the watchers in the early morning saw the boat at last appear, it was unable to take them away, for a party of republican troops, noticing a strange vessel approaching the shore, immediately opened fire upon it, thus obliging the refugees to abandon all hope of leaving France that day. Bitterly did the Abbé regret the boat which he and the Baron de La Lézardière had purchased, but which, owing to the difficulty of getting it to the coast, they had never been able to use ! However, he and the *curé* of Asnières, one of his fellow refugees, now decided to buy another boat, and the *curé's* brother was commissioned to purchase one for the sum of 1,000 *livres tournois*. The Abbé then returned with his servant to Bayeux for a few days, until the boat could be taken to Vieuville, from whence he hoped to be able to embark. On reaching Bayeux, he found M. de La Lézardière, whom death had deprived of another of his children, anxious to leave France as soon as possible.

On August 20th, 1796, the Abbé and his servant, the Baron de La Lézardière, the *curé* of Asnières; and several other refugees, embarked on a fishing-boat and sailed for the island of Saint-Marcouf. Regret must have been mingled with relief in the Abbé's mind as he bade farewell to the land in which, for the last three years and more, he had lived the life of an outlaw. The fugitives did not reach the island without another alarm, for hardly had they sailed out of sight of Vieuville when they saw what they took to be a sloop manned by republicans. The vessel, however, turned out to be an English boat, which immediately took the refugees on board and soon after-

wards landed them safely on the island of Saint-Marcouf. The Abbé asked to be presented to the commander, a certain Captain Price, who gave him a hearty welcome and promised to send him to England on a man-of-war.

Five days later the Abbé, hardly daring to believe that he had at last escaped, landed at Portsmouth with his faithful Louis Bousset. On the next day the travellers went to London, where they put up at the Hôtel de la Sablonnière. The Abbé left six days later to go with the Baron de Roll to Edinburgh, where he was to see the Comte d'Artois and give him Mme. Elisabeth's messages. After spending a week in the Scotch capital he returned to London, where he received the following letter from Louis XVIII., which letter was afterwards published by the king's command for the edification of his loyal subjects. The Abbé had determined to write his memoirs; the king had evidently heard of his intention. The letter is written from Blankenburg and dated Sept. 19, 1796.

“ I have learnt, Monsieur, with the greatest pleasure that you have been able to escape from all the dangers to which your sublime devotion had exposed you. I am sincerely grateful to Divine Providence for having deigned to preserve you, one of His most faithful ministers and the sole confidant of the brother whose loss I shall never cease to deplore, of a king whose memory all true Frenchmen will ever bless, of a martyr whose triumph you were the first to proclaim, and whose virtues I trust the Church will one day perpetuate. Your miraculous escape gives me cause to hope that God has not quite abandoned France; He doubtless wishes that an irreproachable witness should testify to all the sons of France the love which their king ever showed towards them, so that, realising their great loss, they might seek, by throwing themselves into the arms their king is holding out towards

them, the sole balm which their righteous sorrow can hope to receive. I therefore exhort you, Monsieur, or rather I beseech you, to collect and publish whatever your holy ministry does not order you to keep secret ; I can erect no more magnificent monument to the best of kings and dearest of brothers.

“ I wish, Monsieur, I could give you more valuable proofs of my profound esteem, but I can only offer you my admiration and my gratitude. These sentiments are the most worthy of you.”

On reaching London the Abbé was informed that Pitt wished to see him at Lord Liverpool's house. When the celebrated statesman informed him that the King of England intended to grant him a pension in recognition of the valuable services rendered by him to his “ unhappy brother ” Louis XVI., the good Abbé replied that he could not think of accepting any money for himself as long as there were so many poor and suffering *émigrés* to provide for. And he kept his word.

During his sojourn in London, which lasted about six months, he met his cousin, Maria Edgeworth, at the Marquess of Buckingham's house ; such an impression did he make upon her that she declares in her memoirs that she will never forget the short hours spent in his society. On hearing of the Abbé's presence in London, the governors of Maynooth College in Ireland wrote, at the suggestion of Dr. Moylan, begging him to accept the Presidency of that institution. But the Abbé's path was to lie in less pleasant places. While he was leading a very retired life in London, his brother Ussher wrote to him urging him to return to his native land, where his surviving relatives would welcome him and endeavour to blot out the memory of all the trials he had lately endured. He was preparing

to comply with this request when Mlle. de La Lézardière arrived in London bearing important despatches for Louis XVIII., who had taken that title on learning of the death of his nephew, and was recognised as such by all the foreign powers with the exception of the Emperor of Germany. It had been arranged that Mlle. de La Lézardière's brother was to take these despatches to Blankenburg, but when she discovered that her brother had already gone thither, she besought the Abbé to execute the mission himself. Always ready to sacrifice his own wishes, he consented, although, to pay the expenses incurred by the journey, he was obliged to borrow the sum of £100 from a relative.

The story of the captivity and death of the Dauphin, Louis XVII., is the saddest page in the history of France. The tortures inflicted upon this defenceless child are all the more incomprehensible in the light of the great affection for little children which is such a characteristic of the French people. As Marie-Antoinette herself said of him, he was very nervous and excitable and was backward for his years. When it was too late the government rescued him from the hands of his tormentor. A few minutes before he died he laid his head on the shoulder of the kind-hearted physician to whom had been entrusted the hopeless task of remaking what Simon had destroyed ; he was delirious, and, thinking in his delirium that his mother was bending over him, he whispered :

" There she is ! I hear my mother's voice ; perhaps my sister can also hear her ! "

Then in a scarcely audible voice he added : "*Maman !* I want to tell you . . . "

And so he died.*

After his death the following words, scribbled in a babyish hand, were discovered on a panel in the room in which he had been done to death. "*Maman, je vous pri . . .*" The last word is written as if the pencil or chalk had broken and crumbled away in the trembling fingers. What volumes of suffering, of loneliness, and of longing for his mother's love and care are expressed in that unfinished prayer! Later, in Marie-Antoinette's bedroom were found two lines drawn with pencil, marking the respective heights of her little son and daughter. The *conventionnel*, Rovère,† one of the most sanguinary of all the revolutionists, speaks of finding the following sentences scribbled on the walls of Madame Royale's cell :

" Marie-Thérèse-Charlotte is the most unhappy creature on earth. She cannot obtain any news of her mother, nor is she allowed to go to her, although she has begged for permission to do so over and over again. Long life to my good mother, whom I love so dearly and of whom I can get no news. . . . Oh ! my father, take care of me. . . . Oh, God ! forgive those who are killing my parents ! "

Well might Rovère, on reading these mute prayers, say : " I felt as if the Finger of God had touched me. Remorse drove me from the room."

In after years Madame Royale's reserved manners estranged her from many who at first had been anxious to extend to her the exaggerated worship which belongs

* June 8th, 1795.

† Rovère, Joseph Stanislas (1748-1798), a disciple and an admirer of Jourdan Coupe-tête, organised the Terror in the south of France. He abandoned the cause of Robespierre and the Jacobins after the 9th *Thermidor*, and after the 18th *Fructidor* was deported to Sinnamari where he died



Photo Neuvein
LOUIS XVII



to royalty. To explain this apparent coldness she once said in a moment of emotion :

“ While we were in the Temple my parents made it a rule that we were never to shed tears, and this rule, which I schooled myself to observe, has now become a habit.”

The Emperor Francis II. of Germany, having heard of the death of the little Dauphin, wrote to the French government asking that the child's sister might be released from prison and confided to his care. No sooner did Louis XVIII. (who was at Verona at that time*) hear of this request than he wrote to his niece the following letter in cipher, which he begged Mme. de Tourzel, who had also been imprisoned for several months but had been released after Robespierre's death, to give to Madame Royale whenever she had an opportunity of doing so :

“ I send this letter, my dear niece, without knowing whether it will reach you or not ; but my affection for you forces me to speak at this cruel moment. Nothing can repair the fearful losses which we have both sustained ; but allow me to endeavour to lessen the bitterness. Look upon me as a father, I beg of you, and be assured that I love you and that I shall always love you as tenderly as if you were my own daughter. If those who give you this letter can at the same time furnish you with the means to reply without running any risk, I shall be delighted to learn that your heart accepts the offer prompted by my affection for you. But for God's sake be prudent, and remember that I prefer your safety to my own peace of mind. Adieu, my dear niece, I love you and embrace you with all my heart.”

Mme. de Tourzel, contrary to her expectation, found Madame Royale in good health ; she had grown and looked

* Louis XVIII. did not go to Blankenburg until the spring of 1796.

much older. For nearly fifteen months she had been alone in prison. At first she had missed her aunt terribly ; but the habits of industry and orderliness which that good aunt had taught her had enabled her to bear her long captivity ; for, as she herself said of Mme. Elisabeth :

“ She had accustomed me to make my own bed unaided, to do my own hair, to lace my own stays, and dress myself. She neglected nothing in order to keep me in good health. She made me sprinkle water about my room so that it might keep fresh, and, what is more, she made me walk very quickly for a whole hour, watch in hand, every morning, in order to prevent the humours stagnating. . . .”

Mme. de Mackau, who also had eaten the bread of tears in prison, on hearing that Mme. de Tourzel had been admitted to Madame Royale’s cell, begged to be allowed to see the princess, whom she had not met for three years. Permission obtained, Madame Royale, during a conversation with the mother of her exiled friend *Bombe*, said :

“ Let us weep, but not for my parents ; their task is done, they are now reaping their reward. Nobody can take from them the crowns which God Himself has placed on their heads. Let us not pray for them, but for their murderers. As for me, these cruel years will not have been useless to me ; I have had time to reflect before God and before myself. I have steeled myself to bear misfortune. Far be it from me to confound the French nation with those who have taken from me what I loved best on earth. I shall be overjoyed to leave my prison, but I should prefer the humblest cottage in France to the honours which await a princess as unhappy as I am.”

On September 5th, 1795, she was enabled to send a

reply to her uncle's letter through Hue, her late brother's faithful servant :

“ My dear uncle, I was most deeply touched by your kindness in wishing to adopt an unhappy orphan as your daughter. This is the first happiness I have experienced for three years. I love you dearly, and hope one day to be able to assure you by word of mouth of my gratitude and of my affection for you. I am much concerned for your health and long to hear what has happened to you since I last had the pleasure of seeing you, three years ago. I hope that you are well. I pray God every day to give you health and happiness. Adieu, I beg you to be assured that, no matter what happens, I shall always remain your devoted

“ MARIE-THERESE-CHARLOTTE.”

During the three years which had elapsed since Madame Royale had last seen her uncle, Louis XVIII. had visited many lands and suffered many rebuffs ; for nobody wanted *Monsieur*, the man who thought that the salvation of France depended upon him alone, and that he was the only person who could restore peace to its inhabitants. Those three years had been spent in wandering from Schönbornlust to Blankenburg and from Turin (where he occupied himself by quarrelling with his ill-treated wife's father) to Verona. He had been lately feeling especially aggrieved. Mme. de Balbi, after having treated her royal lover's spouse with such insolence that that much-tried person had been obliged to write to her husband complaining of his favourite's conduct, had lately paid her lover out in his own coin by eloping with a count of foreign extraction, to whom she had borne twins in Rotterdam. In a letter written by Louis XVIII. to his wife he

regrets Mme. de Balbi's insolence, and speaks of the scandal caused by his ex-mistress's *liaison* with an unfortunately immoral man (the count), and the still more scandalous results (the twins) of that *liaison* ; he has the insolence to inform his wife that he bitterly regrets " the friendship which had made him happy for the last thirteen years ! "

Such was the man who wished to succeed on the throne of France Louis XVI., an exemplary husband, brother, and father.

It is quite probable that Louis XVIII. would have welcomed Mme. de Balbi back to his nomadic court had it not been for the Comte d'Avaray, who, with considerable difficulty, had succeeded in opening his master's eyes to the folly of resuming the old chain of servitude from which the father of the twins had released him. During these years of exile, the Comte d'Avaray made himself useful to the king in many ways ; not only did he write his manifestoes for him, but he restrained him from committing many a rash and mean action. "*Faux comme Monsieur !*" was not merely a party-cry ; it was used by friends and by enemies, and many an exasperated royalist uttered it during the Emigration.

Louis XVIII., on assuming the title of king, received daily petitions from his loyal subjects for money. Jealousy was as rife at his court as it had ever been at the court of Versailles. At a dinner-party given by an *émigrette*, Mme. d'Anger, the hostess having proposed the health of Louis XVIII., neither M. du Teil nor M. de Roll would drink it. When the latter gentleman, who was a fervent admirer of the Comte d'Artois, proposed

Monsieur's * health, Mme. d'Anger forbade her guests to drink the pledge, saying :

“ As no one will drink the king's health, no other shall be drunk under my roof ! ”

A most painful struggle now began between Louis XVIII. and Francis II. of Germany, both of whom wished to obtain possession of the Orphan of the Temple ; it has been said that her fortune was not unconnected with this desire. Moreover the always possible chance that the French nation might tire of their Republic was present in the minds of many royalists. Both sovereigns wished to obtain her hand in marriage, the former for his nephew the Duc d'Angoulême, the latter for his brother, the Archduke Karl, who, though still very young, had already distinguished himself on the battlefield, and who was to receive praise from one so difficult to please as Napoleon. Neither of the suitors were handsome men. Angoulême, who had been betrothed in his childhood to Madame Royale, was three years her senior. Their dispositions were very similar : he was honest, brave, and generous, and as reserved in his manner as his cousin ; nevertheless he was fond of luxury and amusement. Indeed, this latter taste had lately brought forth a letter of admonition from Louis XVIII., in which his uncle reminded him that the French people were fond of bestowing nicknames, and besought him not to let posterity know him as Louis *le Jockey*.† The Duc d'Angoulême had already travelled half over Europe, having shared his father's exile in Italy, Holland, England, and Scotland.

* When the Comte de Provence took the title of king, his brother the Comte d'Artois, took that of *Monsieur*.

† The Duc d'Angoulême's names were Louis-Antoine.

He was remarkably plain ; but the Archduke Karl, the third son of Leopold II., had also physical disadvantages, for he stammered and, like Napoleon, was said to suffer at times from epileptic fits.

Madame Royale, while still in prison, heard of the Emperor's request for her liberation ; she also heard that she would be expected to marry the archduke if she went to Vienna.

" Ah," said she, " I now see how wise my parents were to betroth me. I will never marry anybody except the Duc d'Angoulême ! "

That Louis XVIII. was well aware of the reason why Francis II. wished Madame Royale to come to Vienna is proved by his letter to Mme. de Tourzel, in which he says :

" It is difficult for me to believe in the complete disinterestedness of the Viennese court ; I cannot help suspecting that, under a cloak of apparent generosity, it hides a plan to make me purchase my niece's liberty very dearly . . . "

Although fully realising that Francis II. would be more likely to obtain satisfaction from the French government than a person who called himself king of that country, Louis XVIII. determined to make another effort to obtain possession of his niece, and he wrote straight to the *Directoire*, stating that his aunts, Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire, would shelter her until he could offer her a home—which he could not do as long as he was separated from his wife. But Madame Royale had already given her word to go to Vienna.

The negotiations for her release were finally concluded to the satisfaction of all parties. On the night of the

27th *Frimaire*, 1795, M. Benezech, Minister of the Interior, appeared before the princess, wearing the badges of his office, and informed her that she was free to leave her prison. Her gaolers did not send her away empty-handed ; she was given a magnificent trousseau worthy of a royal bride. Neither did she go alone. Her travelling-companions were Mme. Mackau, one of the commissaries who had had charge of her in the Temple, an officer belonging to the *gendarmerie*, and a manservant. On leaving her prison, the poor princess seems to have realised all she had lost, for she said :

“ Ah ! it would have been better for me to have shared my beloved parents’ fate than be condemned to weep for them ! ”

As souvenirs of her long imprisonment she took with her a little dog named Coco* which a kind-hearted commissary had given to her, a backgammon board upon which she had often played with her little brother, and a watch which had been given to her mother by Marie-Thérèse. She was obliged to leave behind her a goat of which she was very fond ; for many days after her departure this poor creature wandered about the prison-yard calling for its mistress in a plaintive voice.

Madame Royale’s release was a business affair ; it was not the outcome of sentiment, nor was it prompted by a desire on the part of the *Directoire* to propitiate the foreign powers. The republican flag had lately been far too victorious for that to be possible or needful. In exchange for Marie-Thérèse-Charlotte de France the Republic received its faithful servants Hugues Bernard

* Some historians say that this dog originally belonged to Louis XVI.

Maret* (the future Duc de Bassano), the Marquis de Semonville,† the *Janséniste* Camus,‡ Jean Bancal des Issarts,§ Nicolas Marie-Quinette de Rochemont,† General Pierre Riel de Beurnonville¶ and—irony of fate!—Drouet, the post-master of the little town of Sainte-Ménéhould, whose evidence had placed the head of Madame Royale's father under the knife of the guillotine. It was a poor exchange—one woman for seven men; but then she was a princess.

Many sad memories must have crowded through Madame Royale's mind on crossing the frontier as she remembered that other journey, that fatal flight to Varennes, of which she was now the sole survivor.

* Maret, Hugues Bernard (1763-1839), the son of a doctor, first began life as a lawyer. In 1789 he went to Versailles, where he edited the bulletins of the *Assemblée nationale* and started the *Moniteur universel*. Entirely a self-made man, by his astuteness he obtained the post of ambassador to Naples in 1792. While on his way to that town he was captured by the Austrians and kept prisoner until 1795.

† Semonville, Charles Louis Huguet, Marquis de (1759-1839), son of one of the secretaries of Louis XVI.; he entered the parliament in 1777. The Republic entrusted to him several missions abroad; he was going to Constantinople as ambassador in 1793 when he, too, was captured by the Austrians.

‡ Camus, Armand Gaston (1740-1804), first lawyer, then deputy for Paris at the *Assemblée constituante*. In 1793 he was on his way to Belgium with an order to arrest Dumouriez, when the latter, having learnt the nature of his compatriot's mission, warned the Austrians, who promptly took him prisoner.

§ Des Issarts, Jean Henri Bancal (1750-1826), represented the Puy de Dôme at the *Convention* in 1792. He accompanied Camus on his mission to arrest Dumouriez, when he, too, was arrested.

¶ Rochemont, Nicolas Marie-Quinette de (1762-1826), represented the department of Aisne both at the *Assemblée* and at the *Convention*. He was arrested on the same mission.

¶ Beurnonville, Pierre Riel de (1752-1821), although of aristocratic birth, early adopted revolutionary principles. He entered the republican army, served under Lückner and Dumouriez in 1792, took part in the glorious victories of Valmy and Jemmapes, and was made Minister of War in the same year. He was taken prisoner while endeavouring to arrest his former chief and imprisoned at Olmütz in Moravia, together with Camus, Bancal des Issarts, Rochemont, and Drouet. On returning to France after his release he was given command of the *armée de Sambre et Meuse*.

MADAME ROYALE LEAVES FRANCE 201

She bade adieu to France with tears in her eyes. Turning towards Mme. de Mackau, she whispered :

“ I leave France with regret ; I shall never cease to look upon her as my country ! ”

On reaching Bâle, December 26th, Madame Royale was met by the Prince de Gavre, who was waiting to conduct her to the home of her dead mother. Either from greed or from distrust of the *émigrés*, who were swarming over the whole country, the Emperor gave this gentleman strict orders to permit nobody to enter into conversation with the princess. From the day she left Bâle until she set foot in her mother's country, Madame Royale was not allowed to speak to any of her compatriots, though many presented themselves during the journey and endeavoured to offer their respects to the daughter of their late king. Nor were such important personages as the Prince de Condé or the Comte d'Avaray, her uncle's right hand, admitted to her presence. On one occasion M. Berthier, one of the Prince de Gavre's aides-de-camp, despairing of ever being able to see her, actually stopped the princess's carriage on a lonely road and advanced towards the vehicle in the hope of whispering a few words into her ear, only to be rudely driven back by the officer who was acting as the princess's escort.

Five days were spent in getting from Bâle to Füssen in the Tyrol, where the Elector of Trèves and his sister, the Princess Cunégonde,* welcomed the poor wayfarer and showered upon her the care and affection of which she had so long been deprived. To these good souls she

* Clement Wenceslas, Prince of Saxony, born 1739; Marie Cunégonde Hedwige Françoise Xavière Florence, Princess of Saxony, born 1740. They were brother and sister to the Dauphine, the mother of Louis XVI. and were great-uncle and great-aunt to Marie Antoinette.

entrusted a letter written to her uncle Louis XVIII. while the shadow of prison bars still lay on her heart. In it she begged him to forgive the French nation for what they had done to her parents, pleading, as their excuse, that they had been misled most cruelly.

Louis XVIII., realising that the archduke, being, so to speak, on the spot, would have more chance of winning Madame Royale's affections—for she had not seen her cousin Angoulême for six years—urged her in a very diplomatic letter to remember her dead parents' wishes concerning the choice of a husband. He even sought to put into her mouth the reply which he desired her to give to any proposal on the part of the Archduke Karl, for he said, in a letter dated Jan. 9th, 1796 :

“ . . . Here is the reply I wish you to make : ‘ I pledged my promise to my cousin, the Duc d’Angoulême, of my own free will and with the consent of the king, my uncle.’ ”

A week later he writes again :

“ . . . At any other time people might think that I was trying to tempt you with a crown, for the Duc d’Angoulême is my natural heir. However, you yourself know that if I cannot offer you a throne, misery and exile must be our lot.”

Not content with writing himself, Louis XVIII. made the Comte d’Avaray write to the Duc d’Angoulême urging him to bestir himself and display some interest in his betrothed.

Madame Royale does not betray what she thought of this strange behaviour on the part of her uncle, but she

could remember how she had dreaded and distrusted him in her childhood, and she could, perhaps, recollect what her parents had said about him.

Before reaching Vienna, which was to be her home for she knew not how long, she wrote from Innsbruck to Louis XVIII., promising to obey her dead parents' wishes, and repeating her request that her uncle would spare her country any farther warfare. This letter is justly celebrated.

" . . . I prefer to share the misfortunes of my relations, as long as they may endure, rather than dwell at the court of a prince inimical to my family and my fatherland. . . . I have a favour to ask of my uncle, that is to pardon the French and to make peace. Yes, my uncle, I, whose father, mother, and aunt they assassinated, beg you on my bended knees to forgive them and to make peace. I ask it for your own sake. Never will you be able to ascend the throne by force ; by mercy alone can you succeed, therefore I beseech you to put an end to the wars which are devastating your unhappy kingdom. Alas ! if this war lasts much longer, you will only reign over a heap of corpses. Opinions often change, but peace is necessary to everybody ; when they know that they owe that peace to my uncle, they will return to you and adore you. My uncle ! you are so kind-hearted ! forgive them ; put an end to this cruel war. Alas ! if my virtuous father were still alive, I know very well what he would do. . . . The Parisians are dying of hunger ; the government is unpopular. People refuse to accept the *assignats* in the provinces ; everything which comes from Paris is abhorred, and people boast aloud of their aristocratic birth. Opinions have changed very much of late, but the foreigners are rightly detested, and the French are easily deceived concerning their prince, whom they have seen take up arms against his own subjects. . . .

" In short, my uncle, they hate bloodshed ; they are

dying of hunger ; you are too kind-hearted to allow the French to starve to death when it lies in your power to give them back the means of existence and to make yourself beloved by restoring peace to my unhappy country. I ask you in the name of Heaven and for the sake of my virtuous and unfortunate parents to forgive the French and restore peace to them . . .”

Madame Royale exaggerated her uncle's influence with the foreign powers ; even supposing he had requested his brother sovereigns to conclude peace, it is not likely that they would have listened to him. The Revolution had taught a severe and salutary lesson to more than one foreign prince. No one could tell where a similar insurrection of the masses might not burst forth. The foreign powers considered it their duty to administer chastisement to the regicide nation as a warning to their own subjects of what they might expect if they dared to imitate their neighbour.

On reaching Vienna, Madame Royale begged to be provided with the mourning-garments which her imprisonment had prevented her from wearing after the death of her parents ; she refrained from showing herself at the Viennese court until several weeks had elapsed. All sorts of ridiculous reports began to reach the ears of Louis XVIII. soon after his niece's arrival in Vienna. It was said that she had only exchanged the prison of the Temple for that of the Viennese court ; that a sort of female gaoler, a Flemish woman, had charge of her ; and that her faithful servants, Hue and Cléry, who had followed her to her new home, were not allowed to see her. Even the Bishop of Nancy, the celebrated Monseigneur de La

Fare,* who represented the King of France at the court of Vienna, was not allowed to give her the comforts of religion.

It was useless for Mme. Royale to write to her uncle assuring him that she was her own mistress, and that it was her own wish to live in retirement. She had seen Hue and Cléry frequently during the first weeks of her stay in Vienna, "but now," she writes, "as they have nothing more to tell me, there is no need to see them. The Emperor at my request has given them each a pension, and I hope they will be happy—at least, I shall do my best to make them so." She then goes on to say that the Emperor allows her to see the Bishop of Nancy, who gives her letters from French *émigrés*. She declares that she is as happy as it is possible for her to be. As for her marriage, the Emperor is very kind to her and is quite willing to allow her to marry the Duc d'Angoulême, but "he does not think that the time has come for the marriage yet, and that we had better wait and see what happens. However, if I wish it to be concluded at once, I have only to say so." She tells her French uncle that she has different masters to instruct her, and that she sees a great deal of the archduchesses, who are about her own age. She is convinced that the Emperor will allow her to join her French relations whenever she wishes to do so. Her letter concludes with the following piece of news :

* La Fare, Henri de (1752-1829), was Bishop of Nancy in 1789. As representative of the clergy at the *Etats Généraux*, he opposed every kind of innovation and supported his clergy. Having emigrated in 1791 he chose Austria as his adopted country; here he lived twenty years as the Bourbons' agent. He returned to France with the latter in 1814, became the Duchesse d'Angoulême's confessor, was made Archbishop of Sens in 1821 and Cardinal two years later.

“The Archduke Karl joined the army this morning—this news ought to reassure you. When he returns I shall no longer be here. So you see that the plan is non-existent. Joseph * is in Hungary and will not be back for some time. You see that there is nothing to fear. The five others are still children. Mme. de Chanclos † is an excellent creature ; she knew my mother in Vienna.”

Notwithstanding what she says about hercousin Karl, it is quite certain that he admired her, and that the Emperor and the Empress were angry with her for not marrying him.

This letter ought to have pacified Louis XVIII., but it did not do so. On the contrary, it produced another request that the Emperor would do his very best to hurry on the marriage which the betrothed pair and their uncle were so anxious to see concluded, and for which he had obtained from the Holy Father the permission necessary for a marriage between first cousins.

To this, as to all his letters, the Emperor Francis II. vouchsafed no reply, but Louis XVIII. was soon to have something else to occupy his mind. In the month of April, 1796, he received an intimation from the Venetian government to the effect that, in consequence of a complaint made by the *Directoire*, he must leave Verona immediately. So he was again forced to seek for a roof under which to lay his uncrowned head.

The year 1796 was remarkable for the fact that the *émigrés* began to slink back to France. At first they were very few in number and chiefly belonged to the priesthood ; they came in disguise under false names and carried their lives in their hands.

* The Archduke Joseph Anton of Austria, born 1779.

† The Flemish lady-in-waiting.

The Abbé de Montesquiou,* whose early career had not been remarkable for that austerity which is the white badge of the Catholic faith, and who had taken refuge in England, where he had made himself very useful to the Comte de Provence, returned to France with his friend the Abbé de Damas. Another priest who returned about this time was the celebrated Abbé André, the confidential agent of Louis XVIII. who, under the assumed name of the Abbé de La Mare, had managed to get his name erased from the list of *émigrés*. It would have been better for Louis XVIII. if he had listened to the advice of this Abbé, who was a native of Savoy, and was endowed with courage and intelligence as well as splendid health. He travelled all over Europe in the service of his royal master under the names of the Abbé de Bellecombe, Falike, and David Pachoud, a commercial traveller from Lausanne. A year later he even tried to get himself elected in Savoy, but failed, as did his efforts to reconcile the different parties.

Some of the *émigrés* returned too soon. One lady, having been denounced by an over-inquisitive neighbour, only had time to escape from her old home in her dressing-gown and slippers by a secret staircase. While wandering about the streets, not daring to return although tortured

* Montesquiou-Fezensac, François Xavier, Duc de (1757-1832), was deputy for the clergy of Paris at the *Etats Généraux*, in which capacity he opposed every reform. He continued after his return to France to further the interests of the Bourbons. Patronised by Lebrun and Talleyrand he, during the *Consulat*, handed to Napoleon the letter in which his royal master ordered the future Emperor of the French to restore the crown to him; for this act of folly he was banished to Mentone: he was allowed, however, to go to Ciry in Champagne, where he lived as the guest of Mme. de Simiane until 1814, when he was appointed a member of the provisional government. He was soon afterwards made Minister of the Interior by Louis XVIII. During the second Restoration he was made *pair de France* and duke.

by hunger and thirst, she met a friend who offered to hide her in the bedroom of his daughter, who was absent on a visit. Having managed to send his *concierge* away on a commission, he smuggled his guest upstairs into the empty room ; here he left her with many injunctions not to make any noise lest the lodgers beneath should wonder who was in the absent girl's room.

Many of those who had once lived in France as gentlemen returned to occupy the humblest of positions in order to be near those they had left behind them. M. de Crenol, on going to the school where his children were being educated as *citoyens*, was lucky enough to be taken on as tutor, and was thus able to see and speak to them. Another *ci-devant aristocrate*, a member of the Dudevant de Villeneuve family, was reduced to beg for shelter in her old age at the very *hospice* which she herself had built and endowed at Bordeaux. The *hospice* of Tréguier was filled with old ladies of noble birth who, unable to reconcile themselves to their reduced circumstances, would leave their chairs in the warm sunshine and retire into their chapel to pray on the appearance of the upstarts who had taken their lands from them.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that errors should have crept into those ponderous volumes filled with the *émigrés'* names. A paralytic who had not left his bed for ten years was styled an *émigré*—doubtless he would have gladly been one. The name of the Comte de Lauraguais, who died several months before the dawn of the emigration, figured in one of these tomes. Many thousands of persons who had never left their native land, but had merely changed their place of abode from one province to another

were included. By a cruel act of injustice, or by the fault of some clumsy clerk, the commander of a republican army who had crossed the frontier with his troops was styled an *émigré*.

Driven from Verona, Louis XVIII. chose as his new home the town of Blankenburg in Brunswick, which town had made a favourable impression upon him on the occasion of his first visit. Here he occupied a small flat consisting of three rooms in a brewer's house. The largest of these three rooms served as both drawing-room and dining-room. One of the other rooms was used by the king as his bedroom, while in the third room the captain of the king's body-guard, the Duc de Grammont, slept. In this room mass was said every morning at eleven o'clock.

The king's wardrobe was of the poorest description : he was usually seen wearing a blue coat and a shabby pair of trousers. The day began with breakfast at ten, then mass, after which the king took a walk or attended, with d'Avaray's help, to his voluminous correspondence. The little party dined at four o'clock. Such delicacies as caviare, vin de Malaga, and chocolate were obtained for this notorious *gourmet* from Hamburg. A game of backgammon, the game which had helped the royal prisoners of the Temple to pass the time, was then played, after which the king dismissed his courtiers until ten o'clock, when the card-table was produced and whist was played until midnight.

Although Louis XVIII. kept his tables covered with pious works, he was not above amusing himself at the expense of some of his loyal subjects, the *émigrés*. Of a

certain Mlle. Briochais who had not been well endowed in the matter of good looks, this exiled king said : "*Il n'y a si fichu pot qui ne trouve son couvercle,*" which remark brought forth a burst of applause from his auditors.

The king's court usually consisted of his nephews, the Ducs d'Angoulême and de Berri, the Ducs de Grammont, de Villequier, de Fleury et de La Vauguyon,* the Comtes d'Avaray, de Cossé, de Saint-Priest,† and de la Chapelle, and the Marquis de Jaucourt.‡ Ladies were scarce at this court—the queen was then living a miserable life in the old bishop's palace at Passau ; in fact, the Comtesse de Marsan, formerly the king's governess, and her niece, the Princess Charles de Rohan, were the only ladies.

It was towards this court of *royalistes intransigents* that the Abbé Edgeworth, strong in the conviction that it was his duty to serve the brother of his dead princess as faithfully as he had served her, turned his steps—reluctantly perhaps, for he had suffered so cruelly during the last few years that he must have longed to retire to some

* La Vauguyon, Paul François de (1746-1828), as French ambassador to Holland (1776-84) tried to ruin England's commerce with that country. In 1784 he was sent to Spain in the same capacity. Minister to Louis XVIII. (1795-97) he returned to France in 1805 and was made *pair de France* during the Restoration.

† Saint-Priest, François Emmanuel Guignard, Comte de (1735-1821), after the taking of the Bastille, recommended Louis XVI. to crush out the rebellion with a firm hand. He emigrated in 1790, and returned to France with the Bourbons.

‡ Jaucourt, François, Marquis de (1757-1852), adopted the new ideas with moderation in 1789, became a member of the *Assemblée législative* ; imprisoned in 1792, he was one of the few who escaped death by the guillotine. Banished from his native land, he joined his wife and daughter, who had emigrated in 1791, at Klagenfurt, in Austria. On his return to his native land the marquis, who was a Protestant, was made minister of the *Tribunat* (1803). He accompanied Joseph Bonaparte to Naples ; was made member of the provisional government in 1814 and *pair de France*. He followed Louis XVIII. when that personage was forced to fly to Ghent. With the return to France of the Bourbons, he was made Minister of the Marine. The last years of his life were spent furthering the interests of his co-religionists.



THE ABBÉ EDGEWORTH DE FIRMONT
Portrait published in 1797 by R. Cribb, London
Reproduced from "Mme. Elisabeth et ses amies,"
by kind permission of M. Louis Michaud

haven of rest instead of returning to the vulgar intrigues and petty ambitions and rivalries of court life. No sooner had he reached Blankenburg than he found himself plunged back into what he had hoped never to be forced to endure again.

On reaching that town early in the spring of 1797, he begged to be presented to the Comte d'Avaray, whom he charged to carry his respects to the king. In obedience to a peculiar custom instituted by the brother of Louis XVI., the Comte d'Avaray wrote a note to his royal master in which he stated that the Abbé Edgeworth de Firmont had arrived and was awaiting his Majesty's orders, to which the king replied in writing :

"Far be it from the Abbé Edgeworth to be at my service ; I ought to serve him. He cannot doubt of my eagerness to see him. The hour which suits him best will suit me best."

Beneath a query from the king, "I had already written to Villequier before breakfast. But I told him in my letter not to go until after breakfast, and then to bring the Abbé with him. Should I not do well to invite him to dinner ?" is a note pencilled in the handwriting of M. d'Avaray : "You can send the Duc de Villequier to fetch him."

No wonder that, with such ridiculous hesitations as to what he should or should not do, Louis XVIII. remained throneless for so many years.

He was a typical Bourbon, and the question of what he should or should not eat was always one of great importance with him. He was known to consume as many as

fourteen cutlets at one sitting, and his end was certainly hastened by his habits of gluttony.

The king and his mentor having decided that, as the Abbé had taken all the trouble to come to Blankenburg to see the brother of the unhappy Mme. Elisabeth, it was the proper thing to invite him to dinner, the invitation was sent—and, of course, accepted. After the dinner the Abbé gave the king a detailed account of his last interview with Louis XVI., during which recital the king wept without ceasing.

On the morrow Louis XVIII. wrote a letter to his niece, Madame Royale, in which he repeated the Abbé's narrative and begged her to write a letter of thanks to the good man. This letter, however, was to be published for the edification of the royalists at home and abroad, and was to bear the date of Madame Royale's departure from France. For the first time since her release from prison, Madame Royale dared to think and to act according to her own judgment. The king must have been disagreeably surprised on receiving the following letter from his niece :

“ My conviction, my dear uncle, that it would be most seemly for me not to give the people any cause to mention my name is my sole reason for refusing to write such a letter just at present to M. Edgeworth. I am quite sure that the Emperor Francis would disapprove of such a proceeding, and I cannot believe that you desire me to displease my liberator. Besides which, I will not conceal from you the fact that it would pain me to antedate my letter ; such things can be done by older persons when circumstances require. But I, at my age, ought to be honest and truthful. I hope, my dearest uncle, that you will forgive me for my refusal when you see the reasons which have caused it. . . .”

The term *liberator* must have grated rather harshly on the ears of Louis XVIII., who had never managed to liberate anybody. Swallowing his wrath, he wrote another of those peculiar little notes to his friend d'Avaray, in which he said :

"I have read and re-read my niece's letter before replying, and I beg my friend to do the same. I confess that her refusal to write to the Abbé Edgeworth seemed much more decisive on a second reading, so that I hesitated before repeating my request. I beg my friend to think over the matter and to let me hear his opinion."

D'Avaray for once gave the king bad advice and recommended him to repeat his request, but Madame Royale was not to be persuaded. She wrote to her uncle :

"I should not like my letter to be published. Your letter appeared in all the papers—that was quite right, for it was splendidly written. But I cannot write so well as you. So, as I do not wish my letter to be published, I must deny myself the pleasure of writing to him."

Whereupon the king replied that the Abbé was now staying with him at Blankenburg, and that he was sorry she would not write to her father's confessor, as her letter would have given the good Abbé great pleasure.

Perhaps Madame Royale thought she had been unkind in refusing to write, for she now begged her uncle "to express all the feelings which I experience for him, and which I should be happy to be able to repeat to him by word of mouth."

As if still regretting her silence, she wrote a few days later to her uncle :

“ . . . How I envy you the happiness of being able to converse with my father’s respected confessor. It would be an immense consolation to me if I dared to beg you to write to me once again and to tell me what he said concerning those last moments. No one could have loved my father better than I loved him ; he bestowed so much affection upon me that I should have been truly ungrateful if I had not loved this best of fathers. His death is an irreparable loss to me, and I shall never cease to regret him as long as I live. I will now conclude ; I will no longer importune you with my requests ; but I do not doubt but that you feel them as deeply as I do myself.”

To this request for further details of his first interview with his brother’s confessor, Louis XVIII. replied with the following letter :

“ . . . How can you imagine for one instant that anyone could possibly be annoyed by your regrets ? Do you suppose me to be that monster, surely the only specimen of his kind in the world ? You could not wound me more cruelly did you really think so. But I cannot believe it : you know me better than that. You know how I respected my king, how I loved my brother, how I love you for your filial devotion. I have often spoken of your father to the Abbé Edgeworth ; and although these conversations revive my grief, they are the source of much consolation to me by reminding me that we have one more intercessor in Heaven.

“ Convinced that, as those monsters often said themselves, they only murdered him to cement their tyranny with his blood, he little thought what crimes were about to be committed. His pure soul could not so much as conceive the idea of a useless crime. So, although heart-broken at the thought of leaving your mother, my sister and you, he at least had no fears concerning your safety. As for him, he had already made the sacrifice of his own life some time ago. The knowledge that he had kept his faith unsullied supported and comforted him. He spoke

of it with a sort of joy to the Abbé Edgeworth. The latter having proposed that he should receive the Holy Sacrament, he told him that he ardently longed for It, but that he had not dared to hope that such a thing was possible. The Abbé Edgeworth went and asked his gaolers' permission. The latter hesitated for a long time, expressed fears that the Host might contain poison, and then stipulated that the Abbé must make his request in writing ; they finally gave their consent. It seemed to the Abbé Edgeworth as if he were presenting the Body of our Saviour to someone who had already entered the kingdom of heaven ; and he has since told me that throughout the time he spent with him, his words, his deeds, and even his gestures were marked with a supernatural charm. In that terrible drive from the Temple to the square, he was completely absorbed by the thought of the sacrifice which he was about to make, and never took his eyes off the breviary which the Abbé Edgeworth had placed in his hands.

" Do not ask me to write any more on this subject, my dear child ; I fear that I have already written too much. By what I myself suffer while writing, I can judge what you will suffer on reading this letter. Read rather the passion of our Saviour, and tell yourself that your father imitated our Divine Model as far as it is possible for earth to resemble heaven. There is one incident, however, which happened some time before his death, an incident of which I had heard long before I saw the Abbé Edgeworth and which you know, perhaps, but I cannot refrain from repeating it to you. You know how calm he was while in prison. But on December 19th he remembered that it was your birthday.

" ' To-day,' said he, ' my daughter is fourteen years of age. Oh ! my poor child ! '

" And for the first time since he had been free from the supervision of his gaolers, the tears filled his eyes. . . . I cannot give him back to you, I know, but I will spare nothing to make you happy."

A great affection is a talisman which opens the heart and causes all the treasures of sympathy, which have lain hidden because no use has been found for them, to gush forth ; it has the power to make the most insignificant details of the daily life of the person beloved of the deepest interest to the newly-awakened heart. In those dread hours from which not all the love of our nearest and dearest can save us, the heart yearns to sympathise, to console, to stretch forth the hand of comfort. For

“ Not all the preaching since Adam
Has made Death other than Death.”

Notwithstanding her anguish on reading of her father's sufferings, Madame Royale longed to learn still more. The faithful Hue had been able to give her many details, and yet, although each letter was like a knife-thrust in her heart, she thirsted for further information.

Again the king writes :

“ . . . I can quite understand your deep interest in these fearful details, and I will now continue to endeavour to satisfy your curiosity. Your unhappy father left no written instruction with the Abbé Edgeworth, but that is not surprising. For long resigned to the thought of death, he dared not hope, as you yourself must be aware, for the services of a Catholic priest. His will proves this fact. With this melancholy thought in his mind, he made certain provisions. . . . When he at last obtained permission to see the Abbé Edgeworth, it only remained for him to care for his soul. He had already confided his temporal cares to M. de Malesherbes : the proof is contained in a literal extract from a letter which the latter wrote to me soon after :

“ ‘ I saw the king during the last days of his life ; to me was confided the painful office of informing him of

the sentence which had just been read in my presence. His great soul was laid bare to me in that hour ; the invariable coolness with which he listened to my recital and questioned me concerning certain details as if they did not concern him, the resignation with which he offered his life as a sacrifice, and at the same time his great pity for those who were condemned to survive him, his gratitude towards those whom he considered deserved it, and at the same time his indulgence for the errors of those who had such great reason to reproach themselves, all this Monseigneur will have seen in his will. I saw him once more on the evening of that day ; for it was only on the morrow that we were forbidden to enter his cell. I again admired the presence of mind with which he discussed and arranged everything. He even confided to me some of his last wishes. . . .

“ So you clearly see by this letter that we must not confound the wishes of which M. de Malesherbes speaks with the will mentioned above by him. We still have to learn whether that will did not perish with him to whom it was entrusted. I flatter myself that it did not. Although the rest of the letter proves that he did not expect the fate which was reserved for him,* he could not conceal from himself the fact that he was in great danger ; however, as he was unable to leave Paris and to go and dwell at his country-seat, we may hope that he was able to place the document in safety. I must add, however, that I have heard nothing about it. But that fact does not cause me any anxiety. All the members of his family who were of an age to know anything perished with him. So nobody can tell us anything ; but he surely had some confidant among his servants, and I count upon them to help me to find that document some day.

“ As for the Abbé Edgeworth, at first he was left in peace ; but about six months later, a letter written by him to Monseigneur the Archbishop of Paris having been intercepted, he was forced to leave Paris. He took refuge

* M. de Malesherbes perished with several members of his family, March 10th, 1793.

in Normandy in the house of a gentleman, one of his friends ; here he lived for nearly three years, forgotten and undisturbed until, thanks be to God, he determined to go over to England, which he did without any difficulty.

“How, after speaking of such sad and interesting subjects, can I express to you the pleasure which your letter caused me ? And yet I must do so, for my heart is well-nigh overflowing. I must confess that I was beginning to think that you had not written to me for a long time ; but I was consoled on reading that you envied my nephew for being with me, and that you hoped to come soon. It is certain that nowhere else could you be more tenderly loved ; as for me, my cottage would become a palace if I could have my children around me. Let us hope that that time is not far distant ; meanwhile, write to me often in the same tone. I am quite sure that your heart dictates those expressions, which are such a consolation to my own heart.”

It is amusing to read that the Abbé Edgeworth had been able to leave France “without any difficulty.” But people who are born in the purple see many things in a very different light from those who have been rocked on the bony knees of necessity.

The Abbé Edgeworth throughout his life seems to have possessed a faculty for making friends. Before he had been many weeks at Blankenburg, Louis XVIII. discovered that he could not dispense with the services of the Abbé de Firmon, as he calls him in the following letter, and he tells his head chaplain, the Cardinal de Montmorency, that he wishes his brother's confessor to become one of his own chaplains.

“My cousin, you have heard of the happiness which I enjoy by having M. l'Abbé de Firmon near me. He has sacred claims to the affectionate veneration of all good

Frenchmen ; what claims has he not to mine ! But it does not suffice for me to render the homage due to his virtues and his generous devotion ; I am only doing my duty. I must do more before I can feel content. He who witnessed my brother's death, and he who on the scaffold proclaimed his martyrdom, must be my supporter. The pious courage of which at every hour of the day he will be able to retrace the image, will give me strength to bear the trials which God sends me, and to imitate the virtues of which my unhappy family have given me such grand examples. So he shall stay with me ; his presence, far from increasing the sense of the cruel losses which I have sustained, will be the only possible solace to my grief. It only remains for me to make this appointment public, and I know you too well not to be sure that I am giving you pleasure when I beg you to see that the Abbé de Firmon obtains the post of chaplain to myself."

Such was the Abbé's devotion to the family of his dead princess that the king had only to mention his project for the Abbé to accept his offer. Edgeworth therefore sent word to his faithful servant Louis Bousset, who had remained in London, to pack up his few humble belongings and to join him in Blankenburg.

CHAPTER XI

The Emperor Francis II. guards his cousin : The Abbé Edgeworth writes his impressions to his friend Dr. Moylan : Louis XVIII. endeavours to persuade his niece to hasten on her marriage : She meets the Duc D'Enghien in Vienna : Louis XVIII. is requested to leave Blankenburg : He goes to " God's Country " : Madame Royale postpones her departure : Preparations are made for her reception at Mittau.

IT is very doubtful whether Madame Royale ever cared for her cousin, the Duc d'Angoulême. It is true that a desultory correspondence was kept up by the young people by the king's orders, but it lacked the charm of a mutual affection. In May, 1797, he was about to pay a visit to Prague, whither the Emperor Francis had sent Madame Royale and his own younger brothers and sisters on the approach of the republican army, when news was received at Blankenburg that the Emperor was going to make peace with the Republic. The Duc d'Angoulême had already requested the Emperor's permission to pay a visit to Madame Royale at Vienna incognito, and had received a curt refusal, and now this news for the second time prevented him from paying his respects to his cousin.

A great affection might have had the power to blot out many of the terrible memories of the last few years, for Madame Royale was still young enough to be happy ;

but unfortunately, the Duc d'Angoulême was able neither to conceive nor to inspire a great affection.

Madame Royale was destined to see suffering and death. Her stay in Prague was saddened by the illness of the Archduchess Marianne,* who was dying of consumption. It was thought wisest, when peace was concluded, for Madame Royale and the sick girl's sister Amélie to return with Mme. de Chanclos to Vienna, where the summer months might be passed very pleasantly amid the leafy avenues of Schönbrunn. This plan Louis XVIII., dreading lest his niece should come under the influence of the French refugees then in Vienna, vainly endeavoured to frustrate.

Poor Madame Royale! bereft of those dear ones who had watched over her childhood, surrounded by strangers, suspected by the Empress of having stolen the Emperor's heart, slighted by many of her own relations—neither the Comtesse d'Artois, nor the Duc de Berri, nor her Spanish cousins ever took the trouble to write to her—she stands, a pitiful little figure in her black robes, among the victims of the Revolution. One of the favourite pastimes at the court of Francis II. was to ridicule the sayings and doings of the surviving male members of the Bourbon family, and, perhaps, the players at this game were not always very careful to see that the lonely orphan was out of earshot.

In the summer of 1797 she wrote in her diary :

“My heart sinks when I look into the future. It seems to me as if things were going from bad to worse ; and no sooner does one see a gleam of hope than matters

* The Archduchess Marianne was born 1767.

become worse than ever, for at least we once had cause to hope. When the priests and *émigrés* began to return to France things seemed better. But now I think we are in a worse plight than we ever were before. It is truly terrible ! . . .”

It is not surprising that the King of Spain did not write to his cousin, Madame Royale. Charles IV. knew that he was not in favour with Louis XVIII., for, in order not to displease the French government, he had hitherto refused to recognise him as king, and persisted in calling him the “Comte de Provence.”

Charles IV. of Spain was dominated by his wife, and she in turn was dominated by her lover, the infamous Godoy, misnamed the Prince of Peace. The king spent his life in making futile efforts to be master in his own kingdom. It was nothing but a mere fit of obstinacy which prompted him to refuse to join the foreign powers in their effort to stem the Revolution ; when, in 1793, after the execution of Louis XVI., he declared war against France, it was too late, and in 1795 he saw himself forced to sign the treaty of Bâle.

That the relations between Louis XVIII. and Charles IV. were strained is clearly shown by the following letter from M. de Saint-Priest to Monseigneur de La Fare :

“The king,” says M. de Saint-Priest, “does not blame you for having received (he will not say *accepted*) letters from their Catholic Majesties addressed to *Monsieur le Comte de Provence*. His Majesty, although displeased at this title, cannot refuse the said letters, being forced, owing to his painful situation, to accept the very small assistance sent by the king, his cousin, who makes a very mean excuse for not making the sum larger. The king will not write to him again.”

Louis XVIII. expressed his anger still more openly when he wrote to M. de Saint-Priest :

“ I confess that I have never before realised my poverty so deeply, this poverty which forces me to endure such treatment. If I listened to my own heart, I should send my cousin and all his *reals** to the devil.”

During the Abbé's brief visit to Edinburgh in September, 1795, he renewed his acquaintance with one or two friends, among others with Mr. Alexander Dick, a member of a well-known West of Scotland family. This gentleman, like the Abbé, had passed the first years of his childhood in the Protestant faith, and had afterwards become a Roman Catholic. From his new home in Blankenburg the Abbé writes to Mr. Dick :

“ May 12th, 1797.

“ What have you thought of me and of my truly scandalous negligence in corresponding with you, my ever dear friend ? Indeed, I know not how to apologise for it ; but still, I can say with truth that if silence can possibly be without guilt, it is in circumstances like those in which I have been involved ever since I took my leave of you.

“ During the few months I spent in London, my days were not long enough for all I had to do : and this life of hurry, so distressing for a soul trained up to solitude as mine had been, was likely to continue for as many months more when Providence, on a sudden, put me under the necessity of crossing the seas and travelling all the way here. I was so firmly convinced that the very business that carried me off in so great a hurry would command a still more speedy return, that I deemed it needless to take leave of friends ; and a fortnight, or three weeks at

* A *real* is worth about 2½d.

most, was what I allotted in my mind to go, stay, and come. But alas ! Almighty God had a plan widely different from mine, and, unknown to myself, He was conducting me on to His ends. This I was hardly sensible of during the first month I spent here, as I still intended returning home at some period or other ; but the king having at last disclosed his mind to me and expressed a desire for me to remain with him for good and all, it appears pretty clear that the business I came upon was only a snare cast in my way by All-ruling Providence, in order to prevent whatever resistance I might have opposed to His designs had I known them in their full extent before I quitted London.

" Pardon me, my dear friend, if I dwell so long upon myself. I only purpose to show you thereby in what a wilderness of distractions and avocations of every kind I have spent all my days since I saw you last. Something tells me that for the future I shall be less taken up than I have been of late ; and if so, you are undoubtedly one of the men upon earth in whose correspondence my heart would feel the greatest consolation. For, notwithstanding the general overturn of all that formerly was, my heart still remains what it was in Paris ; and I am sure a heart more devoted to you never existed.

" Be so good as to present my best respects to Mrs. Dick. Indeed, it is needless to recommend her to my thoughts, for she has had a share in them ever since I saw her, and something tells me that one day to come she will give me as much consolation as I have received from her worthy partner. Oh ! my dear friend, if to procure this blessing to her it were only a question of breaking this very instant every tie I have in the world, how soon would they be broken, and with what heartfelt relief I would fly to Scotland ! But Almighty God has reserved the conquest of this precious soul (and, I am confident, that of her worthy mother) to more skilful hands than mine. All I can say is that at whatever period of my life Providence brings about this work of His all-powerful grace, the happiest man upon the earth,

after yourself, will be your tender friend and most sincerely devoted servant,

“ EDGEWORTH DE FIRMONT.

“ P.S.—If you have an occasion of seeing your worthy Prelate, be so kind as to present my respects to him, as also to his vicar.”

It is clear from a letter written by the Abbé Edgeworth to Dr. Moylan some two months later that the latter's life had lately been rather disturbed :

“ Blankenburg, in the duchy of Brunswick.

“ *July 27th, 1797.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAREST FRIEND,

“ I have not written to you for a long time, indeed not for a very long time ; but so many things have happened since my last letter that I cannot be blamed for my silence. I expect you have already heard of my sudden departure from London last February ; I was then only waiting for the fine weather before crossing the channel and paying you a visit in Ireland, for I believed myself free to act as I wished. But when I least expected it, a most extraordinary piece of news from Paris reached me in Berkeley Street and forced me to start without even bidding farewell to my few friends in London. This last circumstance, had I known that I was leaving England for ever, would have certainly pained me deeply, but I was thoroughly convinced that the same business which caused me to set off so precipitately would cause me to return with equal haste, and that at the most three weeks would suffice to go and return. So, notwithstanding my dislike of travelling, I started with an easy mind. How astonished was I, on arriving here, to find that the business which had brought me was only a means prepared by Providence in order to make me do the Will of God. In short, I cannot even look at this circumstance in any other way, for the king, instead of sending me back, as the matter seemed to require, insisted upon my settling the

affair by letter and remaining with him for the rest of my life.

"I need not tell you, my dear friend, what my decision was ; for there was only one thing to be done on such an occasion. Nevertheless, if Providence had placed it in my power to choose my mode of life, I should not have chosen this one, for I think that court-life is just as unsuited to me as I am unsuited to it. But God knows best ; and when He deigns to speak so clearly as He has done on this occasion, I can only adore Him and bow my head in silence. But then it can truly be said that court-life here is absolutely harmless and free from frivolity. Blankenburg is at present almost as quiet as the monastery of La Trappe ; but this state of affairs cannot last. Several incidents seem to point towards a change in France ; if that change comes about, I must confess that Versailles would not be my favourite abode. I hope that God, when matters are settled, will permit me to return to my first retreat in the rue du Bac, where some of the happiest days in my life were passed.

"In truth, I am vexed beyond all expression at having spent six months near you without paying you a visit, especially when I realise that I shall find it more difficult than ever to see you again. However, let me tell you, for your consolation as well as for my own, that I still hope to return and to spend a few days in London. If my dream comes true, rest assured that I shall not postpone my visit as I have already done, but that I shall fly to Ireland before I do anything else.

"As far as one can judge from the newspapers, you seem in a little better plight than you were four months ago ; you have really passed through some very sad times, and more than once I feared that you might experience something similar to what we in France have lately experienced. But I flatter myself that all danger is over now, and that such machinations will open not only the eyes of the English government, but also those of all the other European governments ; for latterly they have all seemed asleep, or blinded by something worse than sleep.

"I ask you more than ever to pray for me ; for I have greater need of your prayers than ever before. Be assured that nobody here below loves you more sincerely, Monseigneur and dearest friend, than your obedient and humble servant,

"HENRY EDGEWORTH."

Notwithstanding the Abbé's apparent contentedness, there is a thread of sadness, a longing for a really peaceful life, running through his description of the court of Louis XVIII. Though he had much to bear, he never allowed himself to utter a complaint. The Abbé de Montesquiou-Fezensac said of him :

"One cannot read his life without feeling touched ; such an effect does his life produce upon one, that one begins to think better of oneself on discovering that there is so much good in the world."

They say in France that "little gifts keep friendship alive." In August, Monseigneur de La Fare received from Louis XVIII. a beautiful mantle of embroidered cloth to give to Madame Royale, with a promise that she should soon have a portrait of Marie-Antoinette, together with one of himself and her future husband. Unfortunately the present was accompanied with a request that she would do her best to hasten on the marriage which was "desired by all good Frenchmen." This importunity drew forth the following reply from the unhappy princess :

"MY DEAREST UNCLE,

"One does not need to be shut up in the tower of the Temple to be unhappy. Certainly nothing can be worse than imprisonment. But the losses endured by

me are sufficient to prevent me ever feeling happy again, especially if, as time goes on, I have to reproach myself for having made others unhappy. That is why I am persuaded that you cannot wish me to marry until peace has been definitely concluded, until everything has been arranged, and until we know for certain what I and mine have to fear or to hope. This is my opinion. I am sure that you think as I do. You are too just and too reasonable to look at the matter in any other light. . . ."

On August 22nd, 1797, the Duc d'Angoulême had a fall from his horse which prevented him writing to her ; the princess immediately took alarm and began to think that he had been lamed for life and dared not tell her. Her grief at his accident was considered such a favourable symptom by Louis XVIII. that he told the Marquis de Bonnavy to go to Vienna and to leave no stone unturned to conclude the marriage.

False hopes were awakened in the king's heart early in the following month ; he had been informed that a certain party in France were trying to place him on the throne of his ancestors. It was quite true that a strong royalist party led by Pichegru* was doing everything it could

* Pichegru, Charles (1761-1804), began his public career as an ardent revolutionist, in which capacity he entered the army, where he distinguished himself by his bravery. Unfortunately he allowed himself to be tempted away from his cause by the Prince de Condé. The reward for his treachery was 1,000,000 *francs*, an income of 200,000 *francs*, the castle of Chambord, the town of Arbois, and the post of Governor of Alsace. Having allowed Austria to win one or two battles rather too easily, he fell into disgrace with the *Directoire*, was turned out of the army in 1796 and obliged to retire into private life for a few months. In 1797 he became a member of the *Conseil des Cinq-cents*, over which body he soon obtained such influence that he was acknowledged as their leader. He was deported to Sinnamari after the 18th *Fructidor*. Having managed to escape to England, he there joined forces with Georges Cadoudal, and returned to France in 1804 with the determination to murder Bonaparte. The plot being discovered, he was imprisoned in the Temple, where he was found one morning strangled in his cell.

to bring back the Bourbons ; however, the *coup d'état* of the 18th *Fructidor*, an V. (September 4th, 1797), destroyed all the royalists' hopes, caused the deportation of Carnot* (in spite of his innocence) and Barthelémy, together with forty-two members of the *Conseil des Cinq-cents*, thirty-five journalists, and an enormous number of humbler conspirators. The elections in about fifty departments were likewise nullified.

During the winter of 1797-8 a portion of the Prince de Condé's army passed through Vienna on its way to Russia, where Paul I. had offered to take it into his service, thus giving food and lodging to several thousands of French *émigrés*. The Duc d'Enghien was permitted as a special favour to have an interview with Madame Royale, described by her in the following letter :

" He had been expected since Sunday, but he only arrived Tuesday night. I saw him yesterday. Oh, God ! how I suffered on beholding at last a member of my family. It is extraordinary that fate should will that I should first behold this member who, nevertheless, is one of my most distant relatives. I deeply regret that the Prince de Condé did not come here ; I wished so much to see him, and to prove to him my gratitude for all he has done for the good cause. As I did not see him, I charged his grandson to tell him. The Duc d'Enghien is likewise very praiseworthy, for he has already distinguished himself. There are a good many French here, nearly all of whom belong to Condé's army. I shall see them all to-day,

* Carnot, Lazare (1753-1823), called the "organiser of ^{victory} liberty," on account of his patriotism, intelligence, and energy. Throughout his career he showed himself to be an honest man. He did not hesitate to blame Hoche for his share in the 18th *Fructidor*. Exiled after this fiasco, he went first to Switzerland and then to Germany. He returned to France after the 18th *Brumaire* and occupied the post of Minister of War until 1801. He opposed the consulship for life and the formation of the Empire, and showed himself a true republican until his last day.

or at least all those who are in Vienna. It breaks my heart to see these unfortunate people starting at this time of the year for a country like Russia, which is so far from their fatherland, and to see old people dragged along in open carts in this cold weather—and why? To live in deserts; for it is said that the country to which they are going is scarcely inhabited except by Cossacks. There they will be alone, and they will never know what is happening in the world. I know what that means. For two whole years I heard nothing, neither of my parents who had died in France, nor of my family, nor of the war, nor of what was going on in Paris. Nothing can be worse than such a position. So I can truly sympathise with them. Perhaps these poor creatures who are going to Russia have left relatives in France. When once there, they will never get any news. I can scarcely bear to think of such a thing. It is true that it is better than starving to death; but it is a miserable life. I will say no more; the subject is too painful for me, and I am convinced that it is equally painful to you. . . .”

Little did Madame Royale think, when writing this letter, that her own feet would wander so far from her fatherland and that she would live in that “desert.”

Louis XVIII. was soon to discover the consequences of the *coup d'état* of the 18th *Fructidor*. In December, 1797, M. Cailhard, the representative of the French Republic, having taken care to arm himself with Talleyrand's permission—the same Talleyrand who in 1814 was so largely instrumental in bringing Louis XVIII. back to his native land—waited upon the Foreign Minister in Berlin, and in the name of his government demanded that the King of Prussia should order the Duke of Brunswick “to dismiss from his states certain guests whose presence sooner or later might lead to trouble.” He hinted that one of the pretenders ought to have chosen a town farther

removed from the French frontier ; and then he wound up his speech with the assertion that the presence of this pretender was responsible for recent disorders.

To whom could the "pretender" turn? Nowhere was he welcome. "Men shut their doors against a setting sun," wrote that profound observer of human nature, Shakespeare.

In after years many of the principalities were ready enough to open their purses and place their armies at the disposal of this "pretender" in order to keep the man who had held them in his iron grip a prisoner on a lonely and distant island.

There was no help for it, Louis XVIII. had to move on. While he was wondering whither he should go, he received a letter from Paul I. of Russia, in which that monarch generously offered to shelter him and his wife. The latter had lately been living at Budweis in Bohemia with her inseparable companion, Mme. de Gourbillon.

The Czar Paul I. of Russia is one of the most remarkable personages in the history of that great white land. He wasted his life doing foolish or evil deeds and in regretting them. He lived to regret having invited the exiled King of France to Russia and to be forced to take measures to ensure his departure. From his earliest years Paul I. was subject to fits of anger—called madness by his subjects—and during these paroxysms of blind fury he would throw his wife on the ground and drag her round the room by the hair of her head. Faithful, however, in spite of all, she was one of the few people who dared to come to his rescue when he was paying the penalty for his past evil deeds.

At first Louis XVIII., although he really had no choice, did not wish to accept the invitation ; he expressed a wish to be allowed to go to Saxony, but no notice was taken of his request. Russia was, as Madame Royale says in her letter, so far away, and the exile still believed that he was necessary to the salvation of his fatherland. Realising finally that he had nowhere else to go, Louis XVIII. wrote accepting the invitation and begging to be allowed to reside in St. Petersburg. To his mortification he learnt that he must live in a little town named Mittau in Courland, formerly called " God's Country," twenty-four hours' journey from St. Petersburg, and from twelve to fifteen days' journey from Hamburg. Louis XVIII. protested that he really could not bury himself alive in this forsaken spot, although it might be known as " God's Country " ; but again no notice was taken.

February 10th, 1798, saw Louis XVIII. once more on the road to exile; the weather was bitterly cold, floods frequently obliged the travellers to turn off the high road, and the dirty inns added not a little to the misery of the journey. The shafts, wheels, harness, and springs of the king's travelling-carriage were constantly breaking and having to be repaired. On one occasion the vehicle stuck in the mire and had to be lifted out. On another occasion, the Niemen having swept away a bridge, the king's carriage was placed upon a boat, which promptly sank with the weight. Having been fished out of the icy waters with much difficulty, it was placed upon two boats fastened together, with the same result, and the king was obliged to spend twenty-four hours in a miserable hovel, cursing his fate and his host.



PAUL I, EMPEROR OF RUSSIA
From an engraving by Tardieu

The town of Mittau with its wide streets, picturesque wooden houses, and the palace built somewhat in the style of Versailles by Biren, the favourite of Anne, Duchess of Courland, with its spacious rooms and lovely gardens, must have seemed a veritable oasis in the deserts of Russia to the exile when he arrived at his new home on March 13th, 1798, accompanied by a small suite of courtiers and chaplains, including the Abbé Edgeworth. The palace, which was situated at the end of the town on the road to Riga and on the left bank of a little river rightly named the Grossbach, had been twice burnt and twice rebuilt. Part of the edifice was used as barracks and part as a military hospital ; it was surrounded with a deep moat full of water, and was built in the shape of an elongated quadrangle. The best rooms were given to the exiled king and his suite. Mittau, formerly the capital of Courland and Sémigalle, prided itself upon its intellectual culture ; the inhabitants, chiefly composed of Russian nobles and German Jews, loved art for its own sake and, considering the fact that they lived in such an out-of-the-way place, were wonderfully civilised.

The surrounding country with its forests, marshes, wide fields, and distant view of the Baltic, was beautiful, but melancholy, and not calculated to inspire the exiled king to cheerfulness or even to contentment.

Louis de La Trémoille saw him soon after his arrival, and said of him :

“ I saw the king last night ; I spoke to him for two hours and a half of all the harm which had been done to him by intrigues and intriguers, of the terror which the title of agent of the king, taken in a certain sense,

inspired in the breasts of everybody, of all that his most faithful servants had had to endure at the hands of such *canaille*. . . . I saw him on the morrow at eight o'clock and began again to speak about the secret history and the position of the royalists both in and outside France, and this I did with such enthusiasm that I burst into tears. . . . He listened to me, but with less attention than on the previous evening. At ten o'clock he informed me that I had told him some very interesting facts—but that just at present he saw no reason why he should alter the line of conduct which he had lately adopted. . . .”

It must be remembered that the above extract is taken from the memoirs of a thorough royalist, and it is clear that this scion of a very old French family was not only dissatisfied with his king's conduct, but did not hesitate to express his dissatisfaction. Among Louis' most faithful subjects and most valuable agents in France was Mme. Henriette d'Anjou, who had lost her husband in the wars of La Vendée and had devoted her fortune and her energies to furthering the king's cause. This lady sent him long and frequent letters written in invisible ink, in which she gave him information concerning what was going on in France and what people were saying and doing.

Those who can read between the lines will find something more to interest them in the following letter, written by the Abbé to his friend Dr. Moylan, in which he speaks of a “gilded screen,” but leaves his reader to guess what goes on behind it :

“Mittau, Courland. May 24th, 1798.

“MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAREST FRIEND,

“In truth I have not sent you a line for a very long time ; I am ashamed of myself when I think of it.

But the sad position in which I have lately been placed must be my excuse.

“ You have doubtless heard that I have come here with our unhappy prince. Why did Providence tear us away from all we love best on earth and bring us to this land of ice and snow ? I really cannot say. Time perhaps will prove to us that what we consider a misfortune is really a blessing in disguise. *Quod ego facio tu nescis modo : scies autem postea.* I will take comfort from these words ; and although I feel down-hearted at times, I rarely repeat them without feeling comforted.

“ I will not give you a long account of our journey here, because it is not worthy of your attention ; in truth it was one of the most disagreeable journeys I have ever made : I now regret to think that I shall have to repeat it if I ever return to England or to France, although the said journey would be brightened by the hope of again seeing those I left behind me.

“ You are certainly curious to know what sort of a life we lead here, and what reception was accorded to our unhappy prince. In truth he cannot complain upon the latter point ; and I could never have believed that such luxury and splendour could be found in such a lonely and remote spot. The palace which he occupies is as fine a building of its kind as any I have seen in France ; he receives all the honours due to his rank ; there is no great difference between Mittau and Versailles. But I leave you to guess what painful hours are passed behind *this gilded screen*. . . . Happily for him, Nature has endowed him with sufficient strength to bear his cross ; and although tormented for some time past by all the letters he receives, his face is seldom clouded.

“ Before leaving Blankenburg (which was equivalent to leaving Europe) he sent for the Archbishop of Rheims and the Bishop of Boulogne, two highly respected prelates, in order to discuss the present sad state of the Church in France. I assisted at this interesting conference, and I should be really embarrassed to decide which was the most zealous, the prince or the prelates ; all I can say is that

never in my life have I been more edified than by the words and the sentiments of both parties.

“As for myself, if I count for anything amid these great catastrophes, my health improves from day to day ; but how shall I pass next winter with its twenty degrees of frost ? Time will show. Luckily spring is here, and who knows whether Providence may not lead us at least a few miles farther south before next winter comes ? Pray for me, my dearest friend, and be assured that wheresoever Providence directs my steps, you will have a true friend and a humble servant in your faithful

“HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

The Abbé refrains from indulging in the exaggerated praise which spoils so many memoirs of royal personages, distorts the mental vision of author and reader, and ruins the historical value of the work. It is true that he praises Louis XVIII. for his courage under affliction—and yet that king was less to be pitied than thousands of his fellow *émigrés*.

That the Abbé did not forget his relatives in Ireland is shown by the following letter written to his aunt, Miss Ussher, and dated July 15th, 1798 :

“MY DEAR AUNT,

“Your welcome letter of December 29th, 1797, reached me on June 25th, six long months after date ! It would not be an easy matter to explain to you the reason of this long delay, if our Captain M’Carthy had not given me the clue by sending a few lines from Hamburg with your letter.

“How then shall I excuse myself, my dear aunt, for having spent six months near you without paying you a visit ? This incident, I must confess, is one which causes me most regret ; but Providence ruled this portion of my life-story as It has ruled all the preceding chapters. I

had quite made up my mind in February, 1797, that I would come and spend a few weeks with you in Dublin ; I was only waiting to come until Lent was over, when suddenly I found myself obliged to cross the sea. I was then convinced that the business which caused my departure would oblige me to return very speedily, and I thought it unnecessary to bid farewell to the few friends I had in London ; I fancied that a fortnight or three weeks at the most would suffice. Alas ! such was my plan, but the Almighty willed otherwise ; and from the way in which matters have since turned out, I clearly perceive that this affair was only a means used by God in order to prevent me opposing His Will, which I should have done if, when I left London, I had known what was going to happen. My presence here is the natural consequence of my own conduct ; and if Providence sends my noble friend still farther north, I shall consider it my duty (seeing how matters stand) to follow him and to share his destiny. In truth it is a painful duty in more ways than one ; nevertheless I cannot doubt but that it is a duty.

“ I hope, however, my dear aunt, that the All-powerful God, by some means which I cannot foresee, will some day give me back to you and to those whom I love best on earth. I assure you that this thought is seldom out of my mind, and I cannot tell you what pleasure it affords me. If such a change should come (that time may be nearer than you think) you will see, my dear aunt, a nephew in many ways unworthy of your attention, but worthy of your esteem, I trust, and as affectionate as if he had never left you.

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

On August 3rd, 1798, Madame Royale received a letter from her future father-in-law, the Comte d'Artois, who was still in Edinburgh, couched in much the same language as that used by her uncle in writing to her. The Comte d'Artois, after entreating her not to listen to any proposals from her Austrian cousins, reminded her that her dead

parents had destined her to the Duc d'Angoulême, and concluded by asserting that all true Frenchmen would be glad to hear that she had chosen his son as her future husband.

Although Francis II. of Germany never took the trouble to reply to the letters of Louis XVIII., the latter charged his niece to thank her imperial host in his name for all his kindness towards her ; as for himself, in one of his letters he plainly says that she ought to be very grateful to him for all the trouble he was taking for her. For he was actually about to summon his long-neglected wife to his side in order to make a home for her. It was, however, one thing to tell his wife to come, and quite another to obtain her consent. Even supposing he could persuade her to forget the past, he was at a loss how to get his niece.

On finding that Francis II. would not take any hints as to giving up possession of his little cousin, Louis XVIII. wrote to Paul I., the Czar of Russia, begging him to use his influence in the matter. The Czar was a despot and a powerful ally of all royalists, and of the Bourbons in particular. M. Forneron tells us that it was Louis' intention to celebrate the marriage of his nephew and niece in Russia, and that he particularly wished the ceremony to take place when Paul I. declared war against France, so that the allied armies, entering Paris as victors, might announce the news to his loyal subjects. However, funds for the two ladies' travelling expenses and the consent of the two emperors had to be obtained first of all.

For some reason or other, Madame Royale was in no hurry to see herself united to the Duc d'Angoulême ;

it is scarcely probable that there was any truth in the rumour that Robespierre at one time wished to marry her, nor that this had anything to do with her reluctance. However, on August 24th of this same year she wrote to tell her uncle that as matters could not be arranged before the winter, when travelling in Russia would be difficult and even dangerous, she would prefer to wait to come to Mittau until the following spring. In order to soften the blow, she added :

“ My heart anticipates all the happiness which I am about to experience with you and with my father's family ; nevertheless I cannot, without appearing ungrateful, leave (perhaps for ever) a sovereign, my liberator, the relative who has been so kind to me. If you agree with me, my dear uncle, that the end of the winter would be a suitable time for my departure, I should like to profit by the few remaining months in order to prove still more thoroughly than my late position has allowed me to do, my gratitude and my affection towards the Emperor, his family, and his subjects.”

To her request, however, Louis XVIII. replied that travelling in the middle of the winter was usually easier than in the autumn or the spring, because the roads, being covered with hard snow, were more passable than when deep in mud or dust. Napoleon thought differently when, a few years later, in order to prevent Josephine following him to Poland on a voyage of discovery, he wrote her letter after letter telling her that a journey in the winter in Poland was impossible for a delicate woman, and that she was not to think of such a thing.

In the month of September Louis XVIII. wrote a sort of round-robin to his relatives, in which he triumphantly

announced the fact that all obstacles had been removed, "thanks to the friendship of the Czar of Russia and the good will of the Emperor of Germany," and that his nephew and niece would soon be united in the bonds of holy matrimony. But that event was not to come off for some time yet.

Golden autumn and hoary winter had passed before the Emperor of Germany, notwithstanding his powerful neighbour's hints to hurry on the marriage, would give his consent or send the necessary funds for the travelling expenses of Madame Royale and the queen, for it is clear from a letter written by M. de Saint-Priest to Thauvenay that Louis was quite unable to pay for his wife's journey.

"As for the queen, I do not know what she will do, for the king has not got a *sol* to pay for her journey. If the Genoese banker does not furnish the money, she will be obliged to remain in poverty at Budweis."

Louis XVIII. spent the winter of 1798-9 preparing his home to receive Madame Royale. He took infinite pains to make her rooms as comfortable as possible. He chose the best rooms in the palace for her, bought embroidery frames and every imaginable sort of fancy work for her amusement, and ordered a piano from London, for which he paid 100 guineas, a fabulous price in those days. On finding that she did not care for music, Louis XVIII. afterwards sold the instrument for 800 *roubles*.*

He also took especial pains to choose a suitable suite for the bride; the niece of his former chamberlain, the Marquis d'Ourches, and the Duchesse de Sérent and her

* A *rouble* is worth about four *francs*.

daughter were among those chosen. Mme. de Sérent had lost her son during the wars in La Vendée, and was therefore considered particularly well suited to occupy the post of lady-in-waiting to the only surviving child of the king in whose service he had perished.

Louis XVIII. authorised Madame Royale to take possession of certain packages which during his stay at Coblenz he had placed in the care of the Elector of Trèves. One of these packages contained some diamonds belonging to her uncle, the king, and a coat which she had frequently seen her father wearing. In one of the pockets she discovered the miniature of a little child. She writes to her uncle :

“ I look upon it as a veritable relic ; it afforded me the greatest pleasure. I think the portrait in the pocket-book represents my eldest brother. But I must confess that I do not remember him very well. May I ask you to tell me if I have guessed rightly ? . . . ”

Madame Royale spent the winter preceding her marriage in Vienna, where the sick-room of the dying archduchess served as a shelter from the scenes caused by the Empress's jealousy. Madame Royale made a point of spending an hour every day with the poor invalid, and, though sick at heart herself, she spared no pains to soothe her suffering.

The following letter, written in the spring of 1799, indicates that Madame Royale's marriage had been fixed to take place in the month of May. It was not, however, celebrated until June.

The Abbé writes to Dr. Moylan :

“ Mittau. *April 1st, 1799.*

“ MONSIEUR AND DEAREST FRIEND,

“ I have not written to you for a long time, but I must plead as my excuse the mountains of ice and snow

which prevented all communication between us and England. The mountains are still here, and there is no sign of a thaw in these cold regions ; but I am assured that the sea is already free from ice outside Hamburg, and that, if no fresh obstacle arises, I may expect this letter to reach you without much delay.

“ It is useless to describe to you the winter we have just passed through ; according to what they tell me, it has been equally hard in your mild climate : but picture to yourself the fact that the whole surface of the country is still one mass of ice, and then you can imagine what it was like in December and January. Nothing can equal the intense cold we felt on certain days : some persons lost the use of their limbs, and others, I have been told, lost their lives. Happily no such accident befell any of the French ; and by taking severe remedies they all managed to escape any serious illnesses. As for me, I got through the terribly severe weather very tolerably well ; I may even say that, with the exception of the short time I was obliged to go out of doors every day, I perhaps suffered less than you in Ireland, so well are the houses here protected against the common foe, although mostly built of wood. Nevertheless, I always shudder when I think of passing another winter in *this iron-bound land* ; but such will certainly be my fate if things do not change completely.

“ From the few newspapers which we see here I learnt of the sad condition of Ireland long before I received your letter ; I thank you, however, for the details you gave me, for they confirm the good news which had already been circulated here. I hope from the bottom of my heart that your wise and firm government will continue its active supervision of its enemies on the continent ; for they have sworn *per fas et nefas* to ruin Great Britain, being persuaded, not without reason, that their own destiny is bound up with hers.

“ I will say nothing of what is being done or plotted in Europe, because you are several hundred miles nearer the great arena than we poor creatures ; on one point.

however, I can satisfy your curiosity better, perhaps, than if I were on the spot, that is to say, concerning the plans of our gracious Emperor in the present crisis through which the civilised world is passing. He has quite determined to combat the revolutionary spirit of the French Republic and to save, if it be possible, tottering Europe. All his troops are on the march. He has given special rank in his armies to those French officers, such as the Comtes d'Autichamp and de Vioménil, the Marquis de Langeron, etc., etc., who distinguished themselves by their bravery during the last war. In which direction will these armies march? I know not, and we cannot guess what will happen when they come to blows with *the conquerors of the world*; but I can venture to say that the republican troops will not get off so easily when fighting the Russians as they did when they fought the Austrians, the Swiss, and the Spaniards.

“ I have lately received a long letter from my sister; she is still in Paris and in good health, but much exercised as to what the year 1799 will bring to the world in general and to France in particular. As far as I can judge, the clergy have not been so completely exterminated as was at first thought; many ecclesiastics remained quietly in hiding in Paris and were able to work on unnoticed. In several other large dioceses religious matters are fairly prosperous; in Lyons, for instance, religion seems to have gained rather than lost by the revolutionists' efforts to uproot it for ever. But persecution is just as rife there as in other parts of France, and priests are scarce. May Almighty God stretch forth His protecting Hand towards this portion of His Church and save it from the dangers with which it is threatened.

“ Everybody here is well, and the king is more than ever worthy of a better fate than that which is in store for him. Providence, however, is now offering him much consolation: all the obstacles which have hitherto prevented the marriage of his nephew, his heir-apparent, have at last been removed. Monseigneur the Duc d'Angoulême is about to marry Madame, the unfortunate princess who

was imprisoned for so long in the Temple ; she leaves Vienna on the 20th inst., at the latest, and will be here by the middle of May ; the queen is coming with her. We have had no news of Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire,* who were in Naples, and we are very anxious on their account.

“ I beg you to remember the whole family, and myself still more as having greater need, in your prayers.

“ I remain, Monseigneur, your old friend and very humble servant,

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

“ P.S.—Mr. Erskine is misinformed ; I do not intend to publish anything. The little I might add to what has already been printed has for long been in the hands of the king and his brother : they are at liberty to make whatever use they like of my manuscript ; but I, for my part, shall publish nothing.”

In the above letter to Dr. Moylan the Abbé alludes to Ireland's Reign of Terror, the rebellion of “ Ninety-eight.” History tells what part France played in that rebellion. Strange to say, the Abbé's native county, Longford, was the scene of a bloody battle when General Tone, having persuaded the *Directoire* to give him a small fleet, on August 22nd, 1798, entered Killala Bay and marched to Ballinamuck, co. Longford, where he was finally forced to surrender to Cornwallis' superior numbers.

* The king's aunts.

CHAPTER XII

Paul I. gives his consent to Madame Royale's marriage : The queen begs to be allowed to bring Mme. de Gourbillon : Scandalous scenes at Mittau : *Mousseline la Sérieuse* keeps her promise to the Comte du Nord : Meeting between uncle and niece : The Abbé Edgeworth consoles Madame Royale : Her marriage : Madame's troubles continue : Louis XVIII. issues a proclamation : He writes to General Bonaparte : Bonaparte replies through Lebrun : The queen leaves Mittau : The Czar and the king confer orders upon one another : The Abbé Edgeworth goes to St. Petersburg : More clouds appear on the horizon : Louis XVIII. receives notice to quit.

ALTHOUGH, as the Comte de Saint-Priest was sometimes heard to remark, " In this country (Russia) promises are seldom kept, or only kept after much waiting," the Czar Paul I. decided, in this same month of April, 1799, to allow Madame Royale and her aunt to join the king at Mittau, and the marriage of the Duc d'Angoulême with his young cousin to take place. He made a stipulation, however, that the future duchess and her aunt, the queen, were not to meet until they were both at the palace of Mittau. On hearing that his niece was about to leave the Austrian court, Louis XVIII. wrote her a letter full of praises of the relatives who were longing to open their arms to her. A most flattering portrait was painted of her fiancé. Perhaps Louis XVIII. wished to prepare her for the stern reality when he completed the picture with the following remark : " Endowed

with a wonderful facility for hard work, my nephew has for long been forced to lead a life which has made him lose his habits of, and even his taste for, study."

He drew equally flattering portraits of the Comte and the Comtesse d'Artois, their son, the Duc de Berri, and his poor old aunts, Mesdames Adélaïde and Victoire. As for his wife, he dismissed her with the following sentence :

"The queen, whom you will see on your arrival, has always felt more affection for you than for any other member of her family ; the better you know her, the easier you will find it to love her and to live with her."

It was not without reason that they used to say "*Faux comme Monsieur !*" If she was so lovable and so easy to live with, it seems strange that her husband found it necessary to send her away, or rather to force her to leave him for so many years. His letter ends with the oft-repeated phrase :

"You will bring happiness to our whole family, and France will owe you one day of unclouded happiness."

On learning that her husband required her presence at Mittau in order to make a home for the young orphan, the queen wrote to him begging to be allowed to bring her faithful friend, Mme. de Gourbillon, with her ; but she had over-estimated her husband's generosity. He immediately sent off a reply, in which he not only forbade her to bring *la Gourbillon*, but fixed her travelling expenses at such a low sum that even the Comte de Saint-Priest was forced to exclaim :

"The sum is certainly very small for a queen of France, but circumstances may force us to make it still smaller."



Photo

THE COUNTESS OF PROVENCE

Neurstein



It was the queen's intention, notwithstanding the low state of her funds, to travel like a queen. She would not hear of leaving her faithful Gourbillon in Budweis, and wrote letter after letter of protest.

On May 31st the king vouchsafed the following reply :

" If, notwithstanding my prayers and my affection, you have made up your mind to compromise me with the Emperor of Russia, who, after his resistance to my wishes, must have a very strange opinion of us two, Mme. de Gourbillon may come to Mittau ; but I, for my part, swear that she shall not put foot in the palace, and that I will not answer for what the Emperor will or will not do to her."

The latter sentence was rather unfortunate, for it put the idea into the queen's head to write to the Czar. This astute man, however, took care not to answer her letter, but sent it to the king, who, having more influence than his unfortunate wife, easily obtained a promise from his imperial host that the queen's faithful friend should not be allowed to reside at Mittau, and that she should be thrown into prison if she dared to follow her mistress to " God's Country."

The queen was probably unaware of this letter ; had she known the danger to which her friend was exposed, she would not have brought her to endure the cruel humiliation that was awaiting her.

On June 2nd, 1799, their travel-stained carriages clattered through the picturesque streets of Mittau on their way to the palace. Those of the inhabitants who were watching the uncrowned queen's entry into her new home were surprised to see one of the lumbering vehicles turn down a side street and stop outside the governor's

house. Somebody inside the vehicle was heard to utter loud protests which quickly turned into shrill cries and screams for help when the governor, putting his head in at the carriage-door, informed the unhappy Gourbillon that she would see her friend no more, that she was about to be conducted over the frontier, and that if she ever dared to show her face again at Mittau, she would be thrown into prison. Without waiting to hear any more, Mme. de Gourbillon sprang out of her carriage, pushed the governor on one side, bounded up the stone steps leading to his abode, and began a long harangue in which she informed the crowd, which had quickly gathered and was keenly enjoying this unexpected and novel performance, that she was an ill-treated woman, that she had never ceased to seek the queen's welfare, and that Providence would surely punish the king for his cruelty towards her. Her words made but little impression beyond exciting general hilarity, for few of her hearers understood what she was talking about. The governor, however, understood, and quickly ended the performance by forcibly replacing her in her carriage. That very night she was taken to Wilna and there imprisoned. The meeting between the king and the queen after eight years' separation was a painful one. The king received his wife very coldly ; he could find no words of kindness to welcome her. She, on discovering that her faithful Gourbillon had been taken from her, fell into a violent passion. She began by telling her husband a few of the truths which had rankled in her breast during those long years of separation. When her husband, in a brief interval of silence while the queen was recovering her

breath to continue her lecture, coolly suggested that she should retire to her room and remove the traces of her long journey, she refused to do anything he wished her to do : she refused to go to the suite of apartments which had been prepared for her, she refused to change her travel-worn garments, she refused to stay with the man who dared to assert that her dear Gourbillon had been the cause of their long separation. However, Louis XVIII. having declared that as he had had so much trouble to get her back he had no intention of letting her go again—not for the present, at least—she gave in and retired to her room.

The queen's presence had one good effect. Paul I. had allowed the exiled king 200,000 *livres* a year since his arrival. This allowance he now increased to 320,000 *livres*. Together with the 804,000 *livres* allowed him by his cousin Charles IV. of Spain, this sum ought to have been more than enough to support the exiles in comfort. The queen had an income of 10,000 *livres* a month ; the fact that she refused to keep this money for her own use, but gave it, with the exception of a few francs for her wardrobe, to her husband, speaks volumes in her praise.

So exactly had the Czar timed the respective arrivals of his two guests that, within twenty-four hours of the queen's arrival, Louis XVIII. received news that his niece was approaching Mittau. On learning that he was at last going to see Madame Royale, the king ordered his carriage and went to meet her, together with the Duc d'Angoulême. When the princess was told that her uncle's carriage was approaching, she called to the coachman to stop. Almost before the man could obey her order

she jumped out of the carriage, ran along the stretch of dusty road which lay between the two vehicles and, holding out her arms towards the king, who had likewise descended from his carriage, flung herself at his feet and cried, in a voice choked with sobs :

“ At last I behold you once more ! . . . How thankful I am ! . . . Behold your child ! Protect me . . . be a father to me ! ”

It took the poor princess some months to discover that her castles were in the air and would never have any surer foundation, and that her relations, including her husband, were utterly incapable of satisfying her hunger for happiness.

The king, genuinely touched at the sight of the little black figure kneeling at his feet in the dusty road, helped her to rise and kissed her on both cheeks ; she then received the homage of her fiancé, the Duc d'Angoulême, which consisted of a very stiff bow, accompanied by a speech to the effect that he was overjoyed to behold his future bride. When Madame Royale had recovered from the emotion natural upon meeting the man whom her parents so long ago had chosen as her husband, they all got into the king's carriage and drove to the palace of Mittan, where the queen had had time to recover from her outburst of the previous day and was able to welcome her niece.

The princess then asked to be allowed to see the Abbé Edgeworth, the priest who had been with her father during the last hours of his life, the confessor into whose pitiful ear the king had poured all his grief and regret at bidding farewell to his wife and children. She begged to be left

with the Abbé, and no sooner were they alone than she burst into such a wild fit of sobbing and crying that the Abbé became quite alarmed. She turned deadly pale and appeared on the point of fainting. The Abbé wanted to summon one of her women, but she stopped him, pleading :

“ Ah ! let me weep before you ! These tears and your presence here relieve me ! ”

From this interview dated the close friendship born of pity and trust which united the lonely princess and the good priest, and continued until death severed the tie and took the Abbé to join the other members of the family to which he had devoted his life.

When in the presence of her relatives, Madame Royale seemed to become cold and restrained in her manner. Soon after her arrival, Louis XVIII. wrote of her to the Comte d'Artois, her future father-in-law :

“ She is so accustomed to restrain her feelings that she seldom weeps when speaking of her misfortunes. Nevertheless her natural gaiety is by no means destroyed. She laughs and is very amiable when she is not thinking of her past life. She is gentle, affectionate and kind-hearted ; although she knows it not, she has all the common-sense of a grown-up person.”

A pretty story is told of Madame Royale, who was called in her childhood *Mousseline la sérieuse* by her mother's ladies-in-waiting on account of her serious little face and her old-fashioned ways. During her childhood the future Czar Paul I. travelled in France with his wife under the title of the Comte and Comtesse du Nord. Madame Royale's quaint, pretty ways endeared her to

the Comte du Nord, who spent many hours playing with the child and who could scarcely tear himself away from her. On bidding farewell to Madame Royale, the future Czar took her in his arms, kissed her repeatedly, and said, with a tinge of genuine regret in his voice :

“ I shall never see you again, for I shall never return to France.”

At this the little child looked at him and said, in her prim, old-fashioned manner :

“ Very well then, *Monsieur le comte*, I will come and see you in your own country.”

This was how she kept her promise—in part only, however, for she did not see her host during her sojourn in Russia. The Czar was quite willing to shelter the exiled king, but only on condition that they did not meet. Things were very different from what *Mousseline la sérieuse* had expected. She came not as a princess attended by a suite of lords and ladies, but as a fugitive, as an orphan who, during her imprisonment, had lost all she loved on earth, and, perhaps, the faculty of ever really loving anybody again. Her affection for Louis XVIII. was more a feeling of pity for the exile than love for her father's brother.

The first letter Madame Royale wrote after her arrival at Mittau was a letter of thanks to the Czar Paul I. for his hospitality, to which her host replied by sending a diamond necklace as a wedding-present, and a note in which he said :

“ Do not leave my states except to return to France ; when there only remember the repentance of a nation

lace was
before
was there

which weeps for the scoundrels which it once had the misfortune to engender."

Madame Royale was not allowed much time in which to discover the fact that she was about to marry a nonentity.

On June 9th the marriage contract, as is the custom in France, was read to the betrothed pair and their relatives. During this proceeding, the names of the bride's parents were frequently mentioned, when it was observed that Madame Royale trembled and tears filled her eyes. However, such complete mastery had she over her feelings that she was able to go through the trying ceremony as if the shadow of death had never crossed and recrossed her path. The marriage was celebrated on the morrow in the presence of the king and all the French *émigrés* at that time residing at Mittau. The Cardinal de Montmorency-Laval said mass, assisted by the Abbés Edgeworth and Marie.

The king's wedding-gifts to his niece were the watch and ring which her father had worn while in prison.*

No sooner had Madame Royale married her cousin than she found that a most unsuitable companion had been chosen by her parents to accompany her on that long journey which the fellow-traveller can make either a calvary or a pleasant pilgrimage strewn with the white milestones of happy days.

The Duc d'Angoulême had inherited his father's plain looks, his obstinacy, and, what was far worse, his stupidity.

* While lying on her death-bed (October 19th, 1851) Madame Royale asked to be given those precious souvenirs of her dead father that she might kiss them for the last time.

The Abbé Edgeworth, to whom she seems to have turned as to her one friend, either guessed or was told of her disappointment. In vain did he beg her to be resigned and to accept this new trial.

Louis XVIII. also perceived that his niece had not found in her married life that compensation for past sufferings which she had hoped to reap. He, too, begged her to be resigned.

Life at Mittau was monotonous in the extreme. The chief event of the day was dinner, which took place at four o'clock in the afternoon, when the king, the queen, the Duc and the Duchesse d'Angoulême dined in company with the entire court. As at Turin, Verona, and Blankenburg, disputes occurred almost as regularly as the dinner-hour. The king and the queen were constantly at war, and, not content with letting the court know the fact, would very imprudently appeal to their imperial host to settle their disputes. The courtiers followed the royal example and quarrelled among themselves. The Comte d'Avaray, for instance, was frequently at loggerheads with the Comte de Saint-Priest, one of the king's most faithful servants. At last the latter, weary of trying to keep peace, determined to resign his post, and wrote to his nephew, the Comte d'Antraigues :

"I have not got any infirmities as yet, but they are knocking at the door. . . . I should like to pass the rest of my life in peace."

Louis XVIII. still cherished the illusion that he was about to be called back to his native land by a loving and repentant nation. That the Abbé also cherished

this hope is shown by the following letter, written by him to his aunt soon after Madame Royale's marriage :

" Mittau. *July 2nd, 1799.*

" MY DEAR AUNT,

" I have lately received further details of my sister's present position, not only from a long letter in her own handwriting which reached me enclosed in a ball of sewing-thread, but also from the person who gave it to me, an old friend of mine, formerly lady-in-waiting* to the unfortunate Princess Elisabeth. After having escaped with her life with great difficulty she managed to slip through the republicans' fingers and reach the place, where she occupies in the niece's establishment the same position which she occupied with the aunt. She went to see Betty before she left Paris, and she has told me everything I wanted to know concerning public and private affairs in France. My sister is in excellent health and loved and esteemed by all who know her. This was already the case when I left her in 1793 ; but thirteen months of imprisonment and many other trials have developed her faculties in an extraordinary manner ; I consider her one of the most remarkable women of her time as regards mind, heart, and intelligence. The government has forgotten all about her, and she is in no danger ; however, it would be a good thing to recommend Ussher to be very careful when writing to her, because one single suspicious line would do poor Betty more harm than we can imagine.

" She has great hopes that matters are about to take a turn, and I must confess that I myself have latterly been much tempted to share her hopes. Speaking for myself, I should be sorry if such a change were to come too suddenly, because I should be inexpressibly grieved if I had to return to France in a hurry without paying you and Ussher a visit before settling down for the rest of my

* Probably Mme. de Tourzel.

life. But I am too anxious to see both of you not to enjoy the thought that Providence may still grant me that pleasure, though I know not when I shall experience it. Pray for me, my dear aunt, as I pray daily for you ; we are so far away from one another that it is the only proof I can give you of my tender attachment and respect.

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

Such was the blindness and fatuity of Louis XVIII. and his partisans that they actually conceived the idea that Bonaparte was about to place him on the throne which had been wrested from his family. What would he have said if he could have heard the answer of Robespierre II., as Mme. Louise de Condé called the First Consul, to a request from one of the *Chouan* chiefs whom he was receiving at the Luxemburg Palace in November, 1799 ?

“ Re-establish the Bourbons ?—*never !* ”

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw fresh hopes spring up in the breast of the exiled king. With a view to smoothing his path to the throne, he now issued a proclamation in which he stated that, when he came to his own again, he should make no difference between his servants at home and abroad, and that those who had been so mistaken as to accept public positions during the Revolution would be forgiven, provided that they had used the power conferred by such positions to serve him and to lessen the severity of the republican *régime*. These proclamations were distributed in France through the agency of Pierre Paul Royer-Collard (1763-1846), one of Louis XVIII.'s most valuable friends, and a philosopher and politician of note. Collard had been a pupil of the

Pères de la Doctrine and had taught for some time in their educational establishments. After studying for the bar, in 1789 he adopted "the new ideas" for a time and became secretary to the *Commune*. After August 10th, 1792, however, he gave in his resignation and retired into private life for some time. In 1797 he was elected deputy for the department of Marne at the *Conseil des Cinq-cents*. Expelled after the 18th *Fructidor*, he espoused the cause of the royalists, to whom he was able to be very useful.*

One of the favourite sayings of Louis XVIII. was: "One cannot catch flies with vinegar." With a view to winning the *Corsican*, as he called Bonaparte, over to his side, he wrote him the following letter:

" February 20th, 1800.

" GENERAL,

" You must be aware that I have for long held you in esteem. If you think me incapable of gratitude, choose your own position. Tell me what you want done for your friends. As for my principles, I am a Frenchman; naturally of a merciful disposition, common-sense has taught me to be still more clement.

" No! the victor of Lodi, Castiglione, and Arcole, the conqueror of Italy and Egypt, cannot prefer vain celebrity to everlasting glory. You are wasting valuable time. We can win glory for France. I say *we*, because I shall require Bonaparte to help me, and he can do nothing without me.

" General, Europe is watching you; glory awaits, and I am impatient to give peace to my people."

* After the coronation of Napoleon, Royer-Collard retired into private life and devoted himself to his studies in philosophy.

On the same day Louis XVIII. wrote a similar letter to Lebrun,* General Bonaparte's chief lieutenant :

"No matter what their conduct may be, such men as you, Monsieur, can never inspire uneasiness. You have accepted a high position and I am glad of it. You, better than anybody else, know what strength and power are needed to make a great nation happy. Save France from herself ; when you have done this, you will have granted my dearest wish. Give her back her king, and future generations will bless your memory. You will always be too necessary to the state for me to imagine that, by giving you an important position, I can discharge the debts contracted by my grandfather and myself."

Another of his favourite sayings was : " All for the king, nothing by him."

The above letters show a remarkable state of fatuity. The effect produced by these effusions was exactly contrary to what the writer had expected. Bonaparte, who was in Italy at that time, only laughed at the king's pompous style and his ridiculous pretensions, saying :

" It would be quite easy for me to recall the king and place him on the throne. I could do it in six months' time. But what would be the good ? The difficulty does not lie in re-establishing the king, but the monarchy."

Bonaparte had not a very high opinion of Louis' character ; indeed, he frankly confessed that he much preferred his dead brother, of whom he said :

* Lebrun, Charles François, Duc de Plaisance (1739-1824), was first secretary to M. de Maupeou, Mme. du Barry's protégé, and was included in his master's disgrace. As deputy to the *Etats Généraux* he displayed much talent for political economy. Imprisoned during the reign of Terror, he was liberated after the 9th *Thermidor*, and was elected member of the *Conseil des Cinq-cents*. He lent his aid to Bonaparte on the 18th *Brumaire*, for which services he was made Second Consul at the future emperor's request.



Photo

LOUIS XVIII

Neurdein



" I think I should be very unhappy if I had voted for the death of such an honest man as Louis XVI. was."

Louis XVIII. likewise addressed himself to Moreau,* whose subsequent conduct seems to show that he allowed himself to be persuaded, if not to join the king's party openly, at least to do his best to prevent Bonaparte placing the crown on his own head.

" General," wrote Louis XVIII. to him, " your military talents have won my esteem. Your generous conduct towards the defenders of a cause which is yours at the bottom of your heart, has given you even greater rights to my confidence. I am sure that I shall not be undeceived. You will not forget that, of all the different parties in France, your party is most worthy of its king. I speak to you in the name of glory. But you cannot doubt of my gratitude for the important services which I expect from you . . ."

Bonaparte weighed his words well before replying to these letters. Being in no hurry to answer, he instructed Lebrun to write as follows to the Abbé de Montesquiou-Fezensac, another of the king's agents in France :

" France does not expect to change her master. She only wishes for peace, and peace we will have. Nevertheless, the person of the prince (Louis XVIII.) is worthy of solicitude. We shall be delighted to render his position more pleasant if we can possibly do so. Supposing he could gather enough *émigrés* to invade some European State, we would help him to obtain a permanent position ; if he preferred any of the objects which we have at our disposal, we would give him his choice ; lastly, if he preferred private life, Bonaparte would be happy to make it

* Moreau, Jean Victor (1763-1813), a republican general, conspired against the First Consul with Pichegru and Georges Cadoudal, and was exiled to the United States. On returning to Europe he took up arms against his native land and was killed outside Dresden.

as agreeable to him as possible. In short, you may ask whatever you like for his person, and we shall be delighted to give it to him. But there is nothing to be done in France and I recommend you not to meddle with her."

During a subsequent interview between Montesquiou and Lebrun, the latter said :

" Nothing is impossible with so much devotion and so much glory. Bonaparte is young. He may live long enough to ensure peace to his successor and to his government. However, we need not talk about what is going to happen ; we need only think of the present. You, *mon cher*, want to-day what we do not wish to give you ; you do not seem inclined to accept what we offer you. Therefore all we can do is to beg you to express to the king our esteem and the respect due to his person and to his misfortunes."

In a last attempt to save his master's fortunes, Montesquiou uttered the old watchword of the royalist party : the king only desired to see everybody happy ; and then he added that Louis XVIII. might be able to remove certain obstacles which lay in Bonaparte's path to fame and fortune.

The idea that the guest of Paul I., the exile whom nobody wanted, could be of use to such a man as Bonaparte must have appealed to Lebrun's sense of the ludicrous. He put an end to the interview by remarking :

" Undeceive yourself ! Attend to his person, which deserves much sympathy, and forget his rights, which are quite out of date."

The king's chagrin was much increased by a twofold fear, first, that Bonaparte would summon the Spanish branch of the Bourbon family to the throne, and secondly,

that the King of Spain might attack France, overthrow the First Consul and seat himself on the much-coveted throne. This latter prospect was even more repugnant to Louis XVIII. than the former ; the Comte de Saint-Priest said in a letter to one of his master's agents :

“ I hope that Bonaparte will be strong enough to protect himself and that he will not in falling give us a new adversary to fight.”

In the month of April the queen, whose health had suffered much during the long Russian winter and whose temper had probably never recovered from the indignities endured during her married life, went to Pyrmont, where she hoped to meet the unfortunate Mme. de Gourbillon, who, on being released from prison, had settled at Pinneberg, a village four leagues from Hamburg. When it was known that her mistress was coming to Pyrmont, she was asked what she intended to do ; whereupon she replied that “ as long as she lived, she should be at her Majesty's orders and ready to obey her.”

Louis XVIII. soon learnt that the friends had met again. In order to try and separate them the king sent Cléry, who had followed Madame Royale to Russia, to Kiel and commissioned him to choose a suitable lodging for the queen. The latter, however, preferred to choose for herself. She eventually went to reside at the castle of Schivenzee, near Hamburg, which town was called by the *émigrés* the Purgatory between Paris and London ; it is needless to inquire which of those capitals was Heaven and which was Hell.

Paul I., not content with sheltering the exiled Bourbons and many more or less impecunious *émigrés*, during the

spring of 1800 conferred upon his guest the highest order in his kingdom, that of Saint Alexander. In gratitude for this honour, Louis XVIII. charged the Abbé Edgeworth to go to St. Petersburg and present to his imperial host the order of the Holy Ghost, together with a letter in his own handwriting. The Czar was much struck by the Abbé's wonderful charm of manner and humility; throwing himself at the good priest's feet, he begged him to give him his blessing. On bidding farewell to him, the Czar presented him with his portrait set in diamonds and promised him a pension of 500 ducats; this promise he kept.

A terrible change, however, was about to take place in his feelings of friendship for the Bourbons. It was after the battle of Marengo (June 14th, 1800) that the Czar, who had hitherto been inclined to pet his French guests, was suddenly seized with a violent admiration for the victor of that battle; this admiration, before many months had elapsed, was to have some very disagreeable consequences for them.

Louis XVIII. was not the only person who had illusions as to what his neighbours thought of him; the First Consul showed himself strangely deficient in perspicacity when he expected the Bourbons to renounce their claims to the throne of France. On September 7th, 1800, Lebrun wrote to Louis XVIII., in reply to another appeal from that sovereign to be allowed "to make everybody happy."

"It was in order to help save my fatherland that I accepted the position which I now occupy; but I must tell you (and I hope you are brave enough to hear it) that we cannot save France by giving her a king. Be

assured that the First Consul possesses the virtues as well as the courage of a hero, and that he will take the greatest pleasure in making you forget your misfortunes."

It must be acknowledged that the First Consul had a strange method of making people—and sovereigns in particular—forget their misfortunes. In October, 1800, Louis XVIII. received a reply to his letter of February 20th; this reply was written on paper bearing the seal of the Republic and was signed Bonaparte.

"I have received your letter, Monsieur; I thank you for the polite wishes expressed in it. You must relinquish all hopes of returning to France. You would have to walk over one hundred thousand corpses. Sacrifice your interests to the repose and the happiness of France. History will remember you with gratitude if you do this. I am by no means insensible to your family's misfortunes. I shall gladly help to make your retreat an agreeable and a peaceful one.

"BONAPARTE."

Louis XVIII. never again tried to influence General Bonaparte. In future he confined his energies to plotting and planning with his equals, the crowned heads of Europe.

In the following letter written to his aunt, Miss Ussher, the Abbé Edgeworth expresses his firm belief that his royal friend will come to his own again:

"Mittau. *October 3rd, 1800.*

"MY DEAR AUNT,

"If I am not mistaken, I wrote to my brother on the 17th of last month promising to send you a letter as soon as I could find time to write it. Alas! that time was long in coming: the days are all too short for the work I have to do, and I regret that happy time when,

lost to the world and the world lost to me, I always had twenty-four hours at my disposal. Unfortunately things have changed, and the twenty-four hours are often reduced to one ; but it is the Almighty's Will that things should be so. In other respects I must say that my life (humanly speaking) is as pleasant as life can be in a foreign land ; everybody around me, down to the king's humblest servitors, is far more attentive to me than I deserve ; and although I live with a numerous family, so far nobody has ever said an unkind word to me. But even this universal kindness has some drawbacks when one considers it with the eyes of a Christian ; for I ought to remember in the midst of all these advantages that *the friendship of this world is offensive to God*—very terrible words, indeed, for a man who is so favoured by fortune. I must confess that I never think of them without a secret feeling of awe. So pray for me, my dear aunt, lest these miserable worldly pleasures be my sole reward.

“ I expect that Ussher showed you the letters which I wrote to him from St. Petersburg and from here shortly after my return. I little thought a year ago that I should be destined to fulfil the honourable mission which has since been intrusted to me. I cannot imagine why, on this occasion, I was preferred to so many old servants who certainly had more right and who must surely have felt jealous. It was vain for me to remonstrate on this point ; so I concluded that Providence had some reasons of which I knew nothing, and I resigned myself to receive an honour which I had not solicited ; perhaps it, of all honours, was the least suited to me. I will not give you any details of this extraordinary event in my miserable life, because you have probably learnt them from Ussher, to whom I wrote everything ; I need only tell you that I was received by the emperor and treated by his ministers with very uncommon consideration, and that, since my return here, I have not noticed the slightest symptom of jealousy among those who seemed to have cause to complain.

“ I have not heard from Betty for some time ; but I hear from other correspondents that she has not been

molested and that she is well. According to what they say of the different parties now in France, it is very probable that we shall all witness more than one upheaval before order is re-established there ; but *I believe that sooner or later the French will return to their former masters, although it is at present impossible to say how or when.*

“ I beg you once more to pray for me ; and I remain with all respect and devotion, my dear aunt, your affectionate nephew and servant,

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

“ P.S.—Tell Ussher that his correspondent at Hamburg informs me that he has received a letter of exchange in part for me and in part for Betty ; but as I have not received as usual a letter from him at the same time, I fear it may have got lost on the way.”

Mittau was a pleasant enough place in the spring and summer months, but the king and Madame Royale, whose husband was frequently absent, found it ever more and more monotonous. The queen, who was now at Kiel re-united to her beloved Gourbillon, led a far happier life, for not a few *émigrés*, who considered that she was much to be pitied, had gathered round her and were endeavouring to make her forget the fiasco of her reconciliation with her unworthy husband.

About this time the affection of Paul I. for his guests began to wane, owing to a violent attack of enthusiasm for General Bonaparte. This enthusiasm, and the fact that some letters written by Louis XVIII. containing sundry unflattering remarks concerning the Russian court had lately fallen into his hands, prompted Paul I. to seek the First Consul's friendship. On January 14th, 1801, the Czar sent word to Louis XVIII. that he was obliged, much against his will, to request the exiles to leave his

states immediately. The little band of *émigrés* received this "request" with wrath and dismay. Madame Royale, on hearing that her uncle was about to be driven from his Russian retreat, flung herself at his feet and cried :

" I will follow my king wheresoever he goes, and I will share his misfortunes ! "

She kept her word, and her fidelity to her uncle won for her the name of *the French Antigone*.

Louis was now at a loss for a retreat. He could not go to Kiel, for the queen and *la Gourbillon* were all-powerful there, and he was well aware that the French colony would be more likely to side with his wife than with him. England was open to him, but he had heard enough of the Comte d'Artois' experiences at Holyrood to prevent him from going there until seven more years of exile caused him to appreciate the proffered shelter.* He could not go to Italy, for there the new Pope was being broken in and taught to obey the future emperor's touch, which he could not be brought to do without a good deal of trouble and an occasional kick over the traces.

While Louis XVIII. was still suffering from the shock of this totally unexpected blow, he received from his cousin, Charles IV. of Spain, a letter in which that monarch offered him a home. Instead of being grateful, he burst forth into reproaches, declared that he was only being offered what belonged to him by right, and taunted his would-be protector with the accusation that he had hitherto refused to shelter him lest he should displease the republican government. He could not understand

* In November, 1807 Louis XVIII. again had to leave Russia, when he chose England as his retreat. His wife joined him at Hartwell in the summer of 1808, where she died November 13th, 1810.

the reason for this sudden friendship, and was still meditating what cutting reply he could make to the invitation without, however, quite burning the bridge of safety which had been thrown across the slough of despond, when a rumour reached his ear that Bonaparte had thoughts of offering him the kingdom of Poland.

In his indignation Louis XVIII. seized his pen and dashed off a letter (which, however, was never sent), in which he said :

“ The crown of France belongs to me ; no other has any value in my estimation. Do they think that I would accept a foreign sceptre from the hands of the Corsican who has insulted my throne and the palace of my ancestors ? . . . By so doing, I should give my sanction to the Revolution. I should sign the death-warrant of my brother, my master ! I should call down upon my head the blood of all my relatives, of a million Frenchmen ! I can no longer dwell upon this thought ; my blood boils at the very idea of such a thing ! ”

Paul I., however, was not affected by Louis' fate and was determined to have his own way.

CHAPTER XIII

Louis XVIII. leaves Mittau : Death of Paul I. : Many *émigrés* and foreigners return to France : Bonaparte wishes to keep the clergy in leading-strings : The Pope obeys his master : Bonaparte offers compensation to the exiled king : Louis XVIII. is again threatened with exile : He learns of the murder of the Duc D'Enghien : He issues a solemn protest against the usurper : *L'affaire des carottes* : Louis XVIII. leaves Warsaw and returns to Mittau : The *Catéchisme Impérial* : Napoleon chastises the Pope.

ON January 20th, 1801, the representative of Louis XVIII. in St. Petersburg was requested to leave that town, while the king received a letter full of excellent advice from the Czar, who kindly but firmly recommended his guest to go and see his wife and *la Gourbillon* at Kiel, and expressed a hope that he would leave Russia as soon as possible. This letter was followed on the morrow by a still more pressing notice to quit.

At eight o'clock of the morning of January 22nd two carriages entered the courtyard of the palace of Mittau. The king appeared supported by Madame Royale and the Abbé Edgeworth, and they got into the first carriage with the Comte d'Avary and the Duchesse de Sérent. The second carriage was then filled with a few faithful servants, including Hue. The travellers had no fixed plans as to their future home ; to get away from " God's Country " as soon as possible was their present ambition.

The king and his niece, who travelled as the Comte de Lille and the Marquise de La Meilleraye, were obliged to travel slowly owing to the bad state of the roads. The journey was strangely similar to that made by Louis XVIII. three years before. Scarcely had the wanderers begun their journey when the chariot containing the king's servants was upset, and Larue, the head-cook, broke his collar-bone and had to be taken back to Mittau. On another occasion the vehicles sank so deep into the snow-drifts that the king was obliged to alight and, supported by the Abbé, with the icy wind cutting his face, force his way on foot through a perfect blizzard.

The dirt and poverty of the wayside inns added to the travellers' sufferings. At Ilmagen the innkeeper could only give them two bedrooms; the king, the Comte d'Avaray, and the Abbé Edgeworth shared one room, while Madame Royale, Mme. de Sérent, Mme. Hue, and the maid Pauline slept in the other.

The exiles reached Memel in Prussia some ten days after leaving Mittau. After resting a little, the party moved on to Königsberg, where the king learnt the joyful news that, thanks to Madame Royale's influence, he was to be allowed to live at Warsaw. So much money had been spent during their hurried flight that, before leaving Königsberg, Madame Royale had to sell some of her diamonds in order to pay the hotel bill; she showed her kind-heartedness by giving some of the proceeds of the sale to the poor of that town.

A dramatic scene had been enacted in the palace of Mittau on the morrow of the king's departure, when several members of his suite, who had remained behind,

received orders to leave Russia within twenty-four hours. Carriages being scarce, those who could not find places had to set out on foot. In the wild confusion which ensued, many of the *émigrés* either lost or were relieved of their last remaining household goods. The furniture used by the king during his stay at Mittau was ordered to be sold, but much was stolen before the sale could take place.

Louis XVIII. had not been many weeks at Warsaw when he learnt of the death of his fair-weather friend, Paul I. of Russia.* One of the first acts of the new Czar, Alexander I., was to send word to Louis that he was free to return to Mittau whenever it pleased him to do so. Not content with this kindness, Alexander remitted to him certain sums of money representing the arrears of the allowance which his father, who was freer with his promises than with his roubles, had neglected to pay. Although Louis eventually returned to Russia, where Alexander I. treated his guest with all the consideration due to an exile, the Czar never really liked him. Years after he said to Eugène de Beauharnais :

“ I had the Bourbons in Russia and I know what they are like.”

Notwithstanding his kind invitation, Louis continued to reside at Warsaw until 1804. The royal family were not too well provided with funds about this time, and Madame Royale was sometimes at a loss how to make both ends meet. In October, 1801, the Duchesse de Sérent, pained at seeing her mistress in such straits, determined to sell some valuable old lace, an heirloom,

* Paul I. died March 23rd, 1801.



ALEXANDER I, EMPEROR OF RUSSIA
From a lithograph



which she had hitherto been unable to make up her mind to part with. Stifling her regret at parting with her treasure—the last vestige of past luxury!—she wrote to the Czar of Russia stating that she had some old lace for sale which she thought was fine enough to adorn the grand duchesses' *trousseaux*.

The year 1802 saw many *émigrés* flock back to France, for the law of the 6th *Floréal*, an X. (April 26th, 1802), opened the gates of their native land to all French subjects with the exception of about one thousand whom Bonaparte considered dangerous. Many foreigners came too, to bemoan the misdeeds of the late Republic and to scoff at the luxurious court of the First Consul, whose marvellous talents, as they had nobody equally clever in their own countries, they tried with one accord to belittle.

During this year some of the Abbé Edgeworth's relations came to visit the French capital. Maria Edgeworth, the famous authoress, spent several months there with her father in order to perfect herself in the French language. On October 1st she and her father hired a coach which, they were told, had once belonged to Mme. Elisabeth, their kinsman's friend. In her memoirs, Maria reflects upon this singular coincidence and adds that the Abbé had probably often driven in this vehicle with his unhappy penitent. The Edgeworths had been four months in the capital when they had a very disagreeable experience. The name of Edgeworth had awakened in the breasts of some of Bonaparte's spies old memories of a certain foggy morning in January. The Abbé was known to be devoted to the cause of Louis XVIII. Lack of education is pro-

ductive of narrow-mindedness and short-sightedness, and the similarity of names immediately caused a rumour to circulate that Maria Edgeworth's father was a brother of the Abbé de Firmont, the devoted servant of the Bourbons. One day Mr. Edgeworth received orders to leave Paris with his daughter within twenty-four hours, and to cross the French frontier before a fortnight had elapsed. Luckily Mr. Edgeworth knew enough French to convince the First Consul's spies that he was only distantly related to the Abbé, whom he had never even seen. The two tourists were then left in peace.

Bonaparte, not content with his wonderful police-spy system, expected the clergy to act as his watch-dogs, and plainly told them that he should hold them responsible for any popular disturbances in the provinces. Bonaparte was too clever a man not to have learnt a lesson from the wars of La Vendée and the *Chouannerie*.

Robbery on the highways of Normandy was frequent about this time. Bonaparte was well aware of the enormous influence exercised by the French clergy over the peasantry when he said :

"It is the duty of the Archbishop of Rouen to denounce this robbery on the public roads."

For helping to capture several noted highwaymen the Bishop of Vannes received 20,000 *francs*, with the promise of 30,000 *francs* more if he succeeded in exterminating the evil.

Bonaparte's influence was far-reaching. He forced the King of Prussia to deliver into his hands several *émigrés* who believed that they were in safety and were living peacefully at Bayreuth. He obliged the Pope to surrender

to him certain refugees, mostly members of the priesthood, who had sought sanctuary in the Eternal City, which Bonaparte considered too near home to be a meeting-place for conspirators against his power and authority.

The case of M. de Vernègues, a royalist agent residing in Rome, was a particularly sad one, and the Pope was much to blame in the matter. A letter to the Duc de Berri from M. de Vernègues—of course full of blame of the First Consul—having fallen into the hands of one of Bonaparte's spies, the Restorer of the Catholic Faith in France ordered Pius VII. to send the writer back to France, and the Pope obeyed. On hearing this news M. de Saint-Priest burst forth into abuse of the Pope, whom he called a "good-for-nothing" and "Bonaparte's mean-spirited knave."

After being imprisoned in the Temple for a year, M. de Vernègues, more lucky than Pichegru, Cadoudal, and the Duc d'Enghien, was permitted to go to Germany on condition that he resided at a distance of at least fifty *kilomètres* from the French and Italian frontiers.

A still sadder case of Bonaparte's tyranny was that of the Abbé Fénis de Lacombe, formerly a member of the *Assemblée nationale*, who, after some experience of the ups and downs of a politician's career, had retired to Tulle, where he lived with his father, aged ninety-six. Although Bonaparte's spies kept a close watch over his movements, they had been unable to convict him of any conspiracy against the government. However, in June, 1803, Bonaparte employed another Abbé, the celebrated

police-spy Rougier,* to work de Lacombe's ruin. The latter had been warned that he was in danger, and on seeing some *gendarmes* approaching his abode one evening, he jumped out of a window and fled to some neighbouring hills, where he wandered about for three days, half-naked and tortured with thirst. When he ventured to return home, he found that his old father, left to himself and crippled by the infirmities of extreme old age, had died of neglect during his son's absence.

Bonaparte could not brook any opposition to his wishes. Writing to his uncle Cardinal Fesch, November 11th, 1802, concerning the Abbé Beaunier, who had refused to acknowledge the *Concordat* and had continued to say mass—for which he got four years' imprisonment—he said: "As for the refractory priests, I shall have them removed."

It was during Louis' sojourn at Warsaw that the Prussian Minister, Haugwitz,† who at that time professed a great admiration for Bonaparte, hinted to M. Meier, president of the regency in the Polish capital, that he

* The Abbé Rougier, born 1728, a Capuchin monk and director of the Convent of Jourcey, was one of Bonaparte's most loathsome acolytes. He began his career by professing such enthusiasm for the royalists that he got himself into prison in 1800. He was being taken to Lyons when the vehicle in which he was confined was surrounded by a group of armed men under the command of a noted royalist, M. de Rochejean, who overpowered the guards and carried off the Abbé. Six months after this escape, the Abbé went to the head of the police and offered his services as a spy. Having been placed in the prison of Pont de Vesle as a pretended prisoner, he spied upon his fellow-captives and denounced several priests, including the Abbés Mazel and Fénis de Lacombe, together with many of his late royalist friends.

† Haugwitz, Karl, Graf von (1752-1832), was the Prussian Minister Plenipotentiary to Vienna in 1790; he signed the Treaty of Pillnitz in 1791, and became Foreign Minister and president of the cabinet in 1794. He took part in the Treaty of Bâle, by which the Republic promised Prussia certain compensations in the shape of territory. Haugwitz, after having professed great admiration for Napoleon in 1805, opened secret negotiations with England and Russia. He retired into private life after Jena.

would do well to induce the exiled king to realise that he was playing at a losing game, and that he had better accept some handsome compensation from Bonaparte. To this hint Louis replied as follows :

“ I do not confound Monsieur Bonaparte with his predecessors ; I esteem his valour and his military talents, and I thank him for all the good he has done my people. But he is mistaken if he thinks to persuade me to relinquish any of my rights ; far from that, if they were doubtful, he himself would confirm them, by the line of conduct he is now pursuing. I know not what God holds in store for me and mine ; but I know what duty He has given me to fulfil by placing me in that position in which it pleased Him to place me. As a Christian, I shall fulfil these obligations until I draw my last breath ; as the son of Saint Louis, though in chains, I shall still esteem myself as the descendant of Francis I., and I will at least wish to say like him : ‘ We have lost all except our honour ! ’ ”

This is all very poetic, but it does not conceal the fact that he possessed none of the qualities of either St. Louis or Francis I. M. Meier must have been tempted to draw a painful comparison between the exiled king and his ancestors ; as a last effort, he tried to open the king’s eyes to the fact that Bonaparte was now all-powerful, and he said :

“ Bonaparte need only say one word for all the powers to obey his will and withdraw the subsidies hitherto supplied by them to your Majesty ! ”

Proudly spurning the half-veiled threat, Louis retorted :

“ I am not afraid of poverty ; if it were necessary, I could eat black bread with my family and my faithful servants. But do not deceive yourself ! I shall never

come to that ! I have something else to fall back upon, another resource which I must not use as long as I have powerful friends, that is to make my position known in France and to stretch forth my hand, not to the usurping government—that I will never do—but to my faithful subjects ; and, believe me, I shall soon be richer than I am now ! ”

Poor blind king ! those faithful subjects, if he meant the returned *émigrés*, were far too busy trying to save the *débris* of their fortunes to spare much thought for Louis and his following of rapacious courtiers. When M. Meier, annoyed by the king's stupidity, said that the Prussian government would probably be forced to withdraw its permission for the exiles to reside on its territory, Louis, strong in the knowledge that Alexander I. had promised to allow him to return to Mittau whenever he wished to do so, drew himself up proudly and said :

“ I should pity the sovereign who thought himself obliged to make such a decision, and I should go away.”

It was, however, a cheerless prospect, that of return to dull little Mittau with its streets of wooden houses, to those melancholy plains with that distant view of the sea, a view which always gave him an attack of spleen whenever he looked at it, to the insipid conversation of the governor and of the chief inhabitants of the locality who thought that, because they happened to live in “ God's Country,” they must be endowed with all sorts of intellectual and moral gifts !

During the year 1804 Bonaparte, who was soon to make himself emperor, dealt the royalist and clerical causes many severe blows. Although he had sent orders

in the month of February of that year that five priests of the diocese of Blois who had dared to disobey some of his commands should be sent to Rimini, a month later he learnt that they were still in their *cures*. To punish this disobedience he writes that *seven* priests, the five original offenders and two scapegoats, are to be thrown into prison immediately. Ten priests at La Rochelle, ten more at Liège, and a *curé* of the environs of Abbeville were likewise imprisoned about this time, probably in accordance with Napoleon's theory that, as "the Mussulmen, the English, and all other Protestant states have no monks and don't feel the need of them," some dioceses in France had more pastors than they had use for.

In the spring of 1804 the Duc d'Orléans, later known as Louis-Philippe, expressed his intention of coming to pay a visit to his cousin at Warsaw. Four years before he had offered to come and console the exile, but on that occasion his cousin, with scant courtesy, had neglected to send any reply. Louis rightly dreaded lest the Orléans blood should manifest itself in some manner contrary to the Bourbon interests. Perhaps the same reason prevented him accepting the Comte d'Artois' proposal, made about the same time, to come and cheer him up. At all events, neither visit took place.

The life led by the fugitives at Warsaw seems to have been insufferably monotonous, and it is not to be wondered at that the Duc d'Angoulême, unable to endure months and years of semi-slavery, made frequent journeys abroad. In the following letter the Abbé Edgeworth gives Dr. Moylan an account of that life :

“ Warsaw. *March 13th, 1804.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAREST FRIEND,

“ Your letter of January 25th has reached me after being a whole month on the way. If you know how dear you are to me, you can easily guess that nothing could have afforded me more consolation in this ice-bound land. Verily it is a century since I last wrote to you, but the vortex of business with which I have lived surrounded for some time past must be my excuse. I hope that you will not wrong me by doubting my affection. No, no, beloved friend, my heart is exactly as it was in my youth ; you know how attached I was to you. Time has verily made ravages upon my person and even upon my intellect ; but it has no power over the affection which binds me to you, and you have not been absent from my thoughts since our last interview in the rue du Bac.

“ I do not think it necessary to describe to you my position here, because my brother, who has the good fortune to see you from time to time, will have told you all. I am much grieved to think that I left England in '97 without paying you and him a visit, as I had fully intended, after having promised both of you, to do. The fact is that when I went to join the king, I firmly believed that I should be back in London at the end of three weeks ; the Almighty decided otherwise ; and since such is His Will, my dearest friend, I am now here bound to the most unfortunate family in the universe and quite determined to share their misfortunes to the very end. In truth, I cannot complain of my lot, for no more august family exists ; the king is not only a believer but a really religious prince in the full meaning of the term, endowed with all the virtues of a saint and far more capable than any man I ever met. Unfortunately he, with his bad health and unsatisfactory physical condition, will find the painful task of re-establishing order in France still more difficult. His nephew and his niece rival him in piety and religion ; the young prince, an ardent admirer of his uncle's profound learning and eminent talents, strives to imitate

this model of perfection and daily develops the qualities which he received from nature ; the heart of his august spouse is a temple of virtue. All three lead most retired lives ; they share in none of the pleasures and dissipations which in this town surpass anything I have ever met with in my travels. They receive a few very short visits (for they pay none) ; a carriage drive, when the weather is fine, or a walk in a secluded spot is the only amusement which they allow themselves. The king spends the greater part of the day in his study attending to business, and he certainly does more in one morning than many men could do in a week. Although he honours me with his confidence and friendship, you can easily imagine, my dear friend, that I have as little to do as possible with political transactions, if such transactions exist at the present time ; only twice have I been drawn against my will into any business of the sort : when the king sent me to St. Petersburg in 1800 on a temporal but honourable mission, and lately when a proposal was made that our unfortunate prince should abdicate, which proposal he so nobly scorned. With the exception of these two occasions, when mere chance drew me for a few moments out of my proper sphere, all my time has been consecrated to giving the king and his few servants here the consolations of religion according to their needs ; another portion of my time is employed distributing his largesse, which is immense considering his small income. He sends money to all parts of Europe and even to France, to those of his servants who have been reduced to penury. I discharge to the best of my ability this duty, which obliges me to write many letters. You now have some idea, my beloved friend, of this poor but very edifying court and of my position.

“ Pray for us all, and for me in particular, and be assured that you will never pray for a more affectionate friend or a more devoted servant than

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

The history of Napoleon contains a terrible chapter,

a chapter where the pages are blotted with the blood of a brave young man and with the tears of his broken-hearted widow. On March 21st, 1804, the Duc d'Enghien, whose arrest, trial, and sentence were contrary to all the laws of justice and honour, was shot in the moat of Vincennes. The duke's aunt, the Princess Louise de Condé, was living at that time in the convent of the Benedictine nuns at Warsaw under the name of Sœur Marie-Joseph de la Miséricorde. On April 2nd all Poland learnt the news that the most worthy descendant of the great Condé had been sacrificed on the altar of Napoleon's ambition. Five days later a visitor to see Sœur Marie-Joseph was announced at that lady's convent. On hearing the visitor's name, the Abbé Edgeworth, the nun guessed that he had come to tell her some bad news. The Abbé's courage failed him, however, as he was about to enter the princess's cell. Feeling himself unable to bear the scene of despair which would follow his announcement, the tender-hearted Abbé begged Mme. de Rosière, the princess's lifelong friend, to break the news to her. With trembling hands that lady grasped a crucifix and entered the nun's cell; then, presenting the holy object to the princess to embrace, she whispered the name of the Duc d'Enghien in her ear.

"On hearing this name," writes the Marquis Pierre de Ségur in his work, "*La dernière des Condé*," "the fearful truth stood revealed. The princess fell to the ground as if struck by lightning, half-dead with grief; a few incoherent words fell from her lips. 'Have mercy! oh! my God! have mercy upon him! . . .' She wept for the child whom she had dandled on her knees, to whom she had for long acted as mother, whose kisses and endearments had often consoled her for life's sorrows and for lost illusions."

Not only in Warsaw was the Duc d'Enghien mourned. At Dijon, notwithstanding the dread of Napoleon's vengeance, many people wore black ribbons on their arms as a sign of respect for the deceased. One or two of the duke's old family servants at Chantilly fell ill from grief, and M. de Ségur relates that the victim's foster-mother and foster-sister both went mad on learning of the murder.

This horrible incident was calculated to make Louis XVIII. anxious for his own safety. The discovery that Napoleon's spies were all over the continent and that there were even two or three at Warsaw watching his movements, determined him to move to Grodno in Lithuania, where he flattered himself he would be safe owing to the Czar's friendship for him. His departure was probably hastened by a mysterious affair which Lewis Goldsmith* informs us was an attempt on the part of Bonaparte to poison the king, his niece, and his nephew. This assertion later won for the clever libeller a handsome pension from Louis. George III., who had good reason to detest Bonaparte, was fond of relating the incident,

* Lewis Goldsmith, born in England in 1763, was exercising the profession of notary when the French Revolution broke out and drew his attention to Paris. In order to attract public notice he wrote "Crimes of Cabinets," which called down upon his head such abuse that he was forced to flee to France. Here he edited *The Argus*, with funds supplied by the foreign minister, in which he attacked everything English. On discovering that the French police were about to hand him over to the English government he returned to his native land; on his arrival he was subjected, notwithstanding his prayers for pardon, to a form of trial for high treason. This trial ended in his discharge on giving recognisances. After his release he wrote a book, "The Cabinet of Bonaparte," and began a weekly newspaper called the *Antigallican Monitor*, in which he libelled Bonaparte as completely as he had before libelled his own countrymen. He continued to publish this paper until Napoleon's downfall; to the libels contained in it he owed the reward and large pension which Louis XVIII. gave him in 1817.

though he probably did not do full justice to Goldsmith's talents. Here is the *Affaire des Carottes* briefly narrated.

A Frenchman named Coulon who kept a little restaurant in Warsaw and who, as a friend of the king's *chef*, had free access to the royal kitchen, one day asked to be allowed to see Louis, as he had something of the greatest importance to tell him. On his request being granted, Coulon flung himself at the king's feet and with many protestations of loyalty produced from his pocket three carrots, all of which had been hollowed out by some unknown hand and filled with a thick paste composed of arsenic, which he declared two mysterious Frenchmen had given him and asked him to cook for the king's supper. The king immediately cried out that it was an attempt of Bonaparte to poison him and his innocent niece. The Prussian government, however, seemed to doubt Coulon's assertions and altogether to think very little of the incident. In vain did the king request that the matter should be inquired into. He was finally obliged to call a committee, formed of the Duc d'Angoulême, the Comtes d'Avaray and de Saint-Priest, and the Abbé Edgeworth, who met and cross-examined Coulon very severely—so severely, in fact, that the *restaurateur*, after contradicting himself several times and trying to implicate several innocent persons, was driven into a corner, and ended by confessing that he had invented the whole affair in the hope that the king, out of gratitude for having been warned of the pretended attempt at poisoning, would give him a large sum of money with which he had intended to pay his heavy debts. Some five years later Lewis Goldsmith contradicted Coulon and swore that he knew all about the



Photo

THE DUKE D'ANGOULÊME

Neurdein



affair, that a plot to poison Louis XVIII. had really existed, and that Bonaparte had paid him to get rid of the royal family.

It was during this same year that Lucien Bonaparte, remembering the murder of the Duc d'Enghien, said to his wife Alexandrine, the *veuve* Joubertson whom Napoleon had always refused to acknowledge :

“ He has tasted blood—let us be off ! ”

Napoleon, however, did not poison his enemies, although Joseph Bonaparte a little later dared to remark to his great brother, when he was thinking of divorcing his elderly wife :

“ If Josephine dies, France, Europe, and even I, who know you so well, will say that you poisoned her.”

Had Napoleon, the best of brothers, been really such a monster, Joseph, who served him so badly in 1814, would never have ventured to speak to him in this manner.

On June 5th Louis XVIII., in a last effort to prevent the *Corsican* usurping his place on the throne of France, issued the following protest to the different European principalities :

“ By taking the title of emperor and by wishing to make that title hereditary in his family, Bonaparte has placed the seal on his usurpation. This new act of a Revolution, which from the very beginning has been one of lawlessness and illegality, cannot possibly invalidate my rights ; however, as I am responsible to all the sovereigns whose rights have been no less encroached upon than mine, and whose thrones have all been shaken by the principles which the Senate of Paris has dared to advocate, as I am responsible to France, to my family, to my own honour, I should consider that I was betraying the common cause if I kept silent on such an occasion. I therefore

declare, in the presence of all the sovereigns, that, far from recognising Bonaparte's right to ask a body which has not even a legal existence to bestow the imperial title upon him, I protest against that title and against the subsequent acts to which it may give rise."

He still failed to realise that many of those sovereigns were going over to the side of the new master of France. Charles IV. of Spain, for instance, sent the usurper the order of the Golden Fleece, whereupon Louis returned to him the same order which had been conferred upon him by Charles' father.

On August 3rd, 1804, in consequence of the *Affaire des Carottes* and of the fact that the Prussian government seemed unwilling to keep him on their territory, Louis left Warsaw in company with his family and his little court. He travelled in a post-chaise with his physician, Dr. Penne. The travellers' first halt was at Grodno, where the king expected to find the Comte d'Artois, whom he had at last consented to meet. As the count did not appear, the king, after waiting there for three weeks, went on to Calmar in Sweden. The Abbé Edgeworth on reaching Grodno had been taken ill, so it was decided that he and Madame Royale were to return to Warsaw, where the queen joined them for a time. From Warsaw the Abbé wrote the following letter to his Scotch friend, Mr. Alexander Dick :

" September 10th, 1804.

" I received, my ever dear friend, with more pleasure than my pen can express, your favour of 19th Feb. (the only one that has come to hand for years past), and ever since I have been seeking for a free morning to congratulate you upon the contents. Hurried on from day to day

by unrelenting business, weeks and months have elapsed. It is but a month since I returned hither from Grodno, where I left the king in perfect health, and pursuing his journey still more to the North. Mine would not permit me to follow him beyond that place, at least he judged it so, and ordered me back with his niece. I don't expect him here before the middle of next month, and his absence giving me more leisure than I have had for years past, I most willingly avail myself of it to spend a few moments with you (the best of friends), whom I have so cruelly neglected of late. The unexpected and almost simultaneous change of your wife and brother is, in all its circumstances, a miracle of the all-powerful grace of God. I must tell you, however, that with respect to the former, I have always entertained the most sanguine hopes since I last saw you, and these hopes (after Almighty God) rested upon your prayers, as He seldom refuses listening to those offered up with faith and perseverance by a husband for his wife. May He pour down upon her all His heavenly treasures, and make her every day more sensible of the signal favour she has received by being so miraculously called to the knowledge of the truth. Tell her how cordially I share her happiness, and desire her to give me now and then a thought. She shall ever be uppermost in mine until I meet her in that land of Bliss, where true friends, once admitted, never part. As to your brother, I have not the happiness of a personal acquaintance with him, but neither he, nor any man bearing your name, can be a stranger to me. I therefore boldly demand his friendship. Indeed, Almighty and All-merciful God has done most wonderful things for him, and this consideration alone is undoubtedly a strong incitement to give up all worldly hopes as the best pledge of an everlasting gratitude. But such a step requires deep and long deliberation; and I am entirely of the opinion of your worthy brother, that nothing extraordinary should be attempted without a very extraordinary vocation.

"I shall not say much of what is doing here, as you are

tolerably well informed of all by the London papers. The queen remains alone with her niece and a few attendants. In less than a month we shall know definitely whether the king returns here or no before the winter. He certainly will if no obstacles occur ; at least such was his intention when I parted from Grodno. Paris—I may even say France at large—is for me as if it never existed. Not a line from thence this twelvemonth past. All hearts are trembling with fear, and the deepest feelings are silenced by the rod of iron that prevails. What a people and what a country, when compared with what they formerly were !

“ Adieu, my ever dear friend. May God Almighty bless you and yours. Give me a share in your thoughts, in your heart, in your prayers, and be assured that you never bestowed them upon a more sincerely devoted servant, or upon a more tender friend.

“ H. EDGEWORTH.”

After spending seventeen days with the Comte d'Artois at Calmar the king, whose efforts to return to Warsaw had met with no success, now turned his steps to Mittau, where, all things considered, he had passed some of the least unpleasant years of his exile. He was fated to have further alarms, for another mysterious incident occurred. On April 7th, 1805, the *château* of Mittau was set on fire in two places. That this fire was the work of an incendiary was proved by the discovery of a quantity of combustible matter evidently placed in the *château* on purpose, and by the fact that the two fires broke out simultaneously in exactly opposite wings of the building. Another fire occurred two days later. It is highly improbable that they were instigated by Napoleon, but there were possibly many among the

king's courtiers who did not hesitate to lay this new crime to his charge.

Napoleon, now firmly seated on the throne of France, continued to keep a tight rein over the French clergy. He chose as his lieutenant Fouché, who had been educated for the Church and was therefore cognisant with its methods. That the Abbé Edgeworth's brethren had a hard life of it is indicated by various remarks scattered among Napoleon's letters to Fouché during the year 1805.

"I should like to know," he writes, "what canonical forms to use in order to disgrace those priests, that they may be delivered over to justice. I am not content with the behaviour of the Vicar of Saint-Sulpice; he, too, ought to be disgraced. That infamous Bishop of Arras! It is important for you to keep your eye upon the diocese of Poitiers. It is truly shameful that you have not yet had the Abbé Stewens* arrested: you must be asleep, or how else could a wretched priest manage to escape? The Abbé de Coucy is doing me no end of harm; he still corresponds with his flock. I wish this man to be arrested and to be shut up in a monastery. . . ."

Napoleon was well served in this matter, not only by Fouché but also by Portalis,† joint author of the *Code civil*, the *Concordat*, and the *Catéchisme impérial*, those mighty blows at papal power. The *Catéchisme impérial* was worthy of the man who claimed to have restored to the eldest daughter of the Catholic Church the right to

* Probably an English priest of the name of Stevens.

† Portalis, Jean Etienne Marie (1746-1807), a statesman who, at the commencement of the Revolution, was an advocate at the parliament of Aix. He was imprisoned during the Reign of Terror, but subsequently became president of the *Conseil des Anciens*. Proscribed by the *Directoire* for the moderation of his opinions, he was obliged to fly to Holstein. Bonaparte recalled him and nominated him Minister for religious matters.

practise her religion. A quotation from it is instructive as well as interesting.

“4th Commandment.

Question : What are the duties of Christians towards the prince who governs them, and what in particular are our duties towards Napoleon I., our Emperor ?

Answer : Christians owe to the princes who govern them, and we in particular owe to Napoleon I., our Emperor, love, respect, obedience, fidelity, military service, and the tributes ordered for the preservation and defence of the Empire and his throne ; we must also offer fervent prayers for his health and for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the State.

Q. : Why ought we to fulfil these duties towards our Emperor ?

A. : Firstly, because God, who creates empires and distributes them according to His holy Will, by showering His gifts upon our Emperor, both in time of war and in time of peace, has established him as our sovereign, has made him the Minister of His power and His representative upon earth. So by honouring and serving our Emperor we honour and serve God Himself. Secondly, because Our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us by His doctrine and by His example what we owe to our sovereign ; He was born during the reign of Cæsar Augustus, He paid the price, and by commanding us to render to God the things that belong to God, He has also commanded us to render to Cæsar the things that belong to Cæsar.

Q. : Are there no special reasons why we should love our Emperor, Napoleon I. ?

A. : Yes, for he is the man whom God raised up in an hour of great tribulation in order to re-establish the public faith and the holy religion of our fathers. He has reawakened and kept public order by his profound and ever-active wisdom ; he protects the State with his powerful arm ; he has become the Lord's anointed by

the blessing of the Sovereign Pontiff, head of the universal Church.

Q. : What ought we to think of those who fail in their duty towards our Emperor ?

A. : According to the apostle Saint Paul they, by so doing, resist the order established by God Himself and are worthy of everlasting damnation.

Q. : Does our duty towards our Emperor bind us also to serve his legitimate successors in the order established by the constitutions of the Empire ?

A. : Yes, doubtless, for we read in the Holy Scriptures that God, Lord of heaven and earth, by His supreme Will and Mercy, gives empires not only to one person in particular but also to that person's family.

Q. : What are our obligations towards our magistrates ?

A. : We ought to honour, respect, and obey them, because they are the trustees of the Emperor's authority."

It is amusing to read of the sovereign Pontiff's blessing on the self-made emperor, for it had only been forthcoming after considerable pressure. Even then the Pope had still a little courage left, for in June, 1805, he refused to annul Jérôme Bonaparte's marriage with Miss Patterson. Punishment came swiftly. Ancona was taken. Napoleon writes to his uncle, Cardinal Fesch, who was in Rome in January, 1806 :

"I have occupied Ancona because, notwithstanding your remonstrances, nothing had been done to protect it, and also because its habitants were too weak to defend it. Make it quite clear that I will tolerate no representative of Russia or Sardinia in Rome. . . . It is my intention to replace *you* by a private individual. As these idiots do not see any cause why a Protestant should not occupy the throne of France, I shall send them a Protestant ambassador. Can we do nothing with

the fellows? They are becoming the laughing-stock of courts and nations."

A month later Napoleon writes again: "I have no intention of allowing the court of Rome to meddle with politics."

In less than three months he had recalled his uncle from the Eternal City.

"I have recalled you from Rome," he writes, "because my dignity would be wounded if I allowed you to remain at that ill-conducted court, which is so determined to thwart my plans that sooner or later I shall be obliged to punish it."

CHAPTER XIV

The Abbé loses his fortune : He begs Pitt to grant him a pension : Napoleon's Russian campaign : some French prisoners of war are sent to Mittau : The Abbé turns sick-nurse : He falls ill : Devotion of Madame Royale : His last illness and death : Louis XVIII. mourns his loss.

THE year 1805 was productive of considerable trouble and anxiety to the good Abbé. During this year the sum of £4,000, produced from the sale of Firmount, which had been placed out at interest, together with the entire fortune of an aged aunt still living in Paris and the savings of an old family servant named Madame Lefèvre, was unhappily lost by the insolvency of the borrower. The Abbé bore the loss with his usual fortitude ; he took care not to inform the poor women of their misfortune, and by dint of depriving himself of every luxury was able to continue to pay them the interest of their deposits as if nothing had happened. In his will he left a sum of money to be divided between them during their lifetime and to go, after their death, to his faithful servant Louis Bousset, for whom the year 1805 was likewise an unlucky one. Thieves broke into his room and carried off his little fortune of 180 guineas, which he imprudently kept in a cupboard instead of putting it into a bank. The Abbé immediately began to make a little hoard destined to compensate Bousset for his loss

and prevent him from finding himself destitute on his master's death.

The letter written by the Abbé to Dr. Moylan, on learning that he had lost nearly every penny he had in the world, is most pathetic. It is characteristic of the good priest, and it also reveals the fact that, although he had now been eight years in the king's service, he had never received any salary.

“ Mittau, Courland. *May 17th, 1805.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAR FRIEND,

“ Your letter of March 30th addressed to Warsaw, which town I left towards the middle of February, only reached me on the 14th inst. The news it contained is indeed sad, especially at a time when I hoped every day to receive considerable sums of money with which to supply my own needs and perhaps those of a few other persons during the next six months ; but before giving way to these sad reflections, let me, my dearest friend, thank you a thousand, thousand times for the generosity and the affection with which you have endeavoured to soothe my wound. No words can express the deep gratitude which your kindness has engraved on my breast. In truth, if anything in this world could make me forget my poverty, it would be the pleasure of receiving my daily bread from you and from your worthy family. Believe me, my true and generous friend, that if I were reduced to absolute penury, I would receive from you and yours, not only without blushing, but without reluctance, the bread I gladly give to others ; but unless other misfortunes befall me, I shall not be a burden upon you. The master to whom I for the last eight years have sacrificed my liberty, my health, I can even say my existence in this *land of ice and snow*, and whom I have served hitherto without receiving any salary, cannot see me in poverty

without coming to my assistance. His nephew, his niece, his brother, are all equally generous, as are also my friends; they will open their purse to me (of this I am positively certain) the moment I ask them to help me. Besides these resources upon which I can count, I should probably obtain still more substantial resources from the British government and in the offers which Mr. Pitt made me during the short time I was in England. These offers, although I did not accept them then, were not (as you can imagine) despised by me; and, notwithstanding the unfortunate fact that I was summoned to Blankenburg just at that time, I am convinced that I shall not ask in vain.

“So you see, my dearest friend, that my future is less gloomy than you seem to apprehend. It is true that nothing can compensate me for the loss of a patrimony, small I know, but which I had hitherto regarded as out of reach of all human revolutions; for princes and governments pass but countries remain. If I am condemned to suffer this loss (which I really cannot believe) I shall bow without a murmur to the Will of God. Two things, however, increase my regret; first, the loss of the independence which I had hitherto enjoyed and which, in my position, is of the greatest importance for the welfare of the persons committed to my charge; secondly, the cruel necessity which will force me to withdraw my esteem from—whom I had always considered *an honourable, honest, and prudent man*. I say *my esteem*, because if matters are as you represent them, he is not the sort of man I thought him to be, because neither his heart nor his mind can be blameless. One thing is certain, my dearest friend, and that is: if I were in his place and he in mine, he would not have experienced a single hour's delay; I should have lived on my income, no matter how small it might have been, I should have considered myself his debtor, and if I had had the charge of his property, at least I should have taken all the necessary precautions in order to protect it and ensure his income to him not only during my life but after my death; I should have held

it as sacred as the Ark of the Lord, and I should have done my very best to place that income out of the reach of dishonest men. Perhaps I am too hard ; if it be so, I will destroy this page and refrain from judging him until I receive the fatal letter which I am hourly expecting. I will not tell anybody of what has happened, and I will seek no other consolation (except what I shall find in God) than in the profound and eternal gratitude with which I remain, Monseigneur and most generous friend, your affectionate and humble servant,

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

The Persians have many proverbs concerning friendship, among others :

“ One can live without a brother, but one cannot live without a friend.”

“ The friendship of a happy friend makes us happy.”

“ Surely he remaineth friendless who requires a faultless friend.”

The Abbé's letters show that he was rich in friends. The oldest of all, Dr. Moylan, when informing the Abbé of his loss, had not hesitated to place his own humble fortune at his old school-fellow's disposal. Of his other friends the most faithful were Louis Bousset, who had devoted his life as completely to his master as that master had devoted his to his king, and the Duchesse d'Angoulême, who was to act the part of a daughter to him during his last illness.

Pressed by his relations and friends in England and in Ireland to write to Pitt and inform him of his misfortune, the Abbé at last consented to do so ; a pension, which more than compensated him for the loss of his fortune, was immediately granted to him.

The following letter describing his pleasure on receiving this pension seems to be the last letter written by the Abbé :

“ Mittau, Courland. *March 21st, 1806.*

“ MONSEIGNEUR AND DEAREST FRIEND,

“ I have not written to you for a long time, but the busy life to which I am condemned will, I hope, be sufficient excuse. My dearest friend, Providence has been very kind to me. When I desired my brother to inform you with what promptitude Providence had come to my assistance, I was quite sure that you would share my gratitude towards Our Universal Father as you had shared my grief. Never request made to a foreign government (for I am a foreigner to Great Britain notwithstanding the ties of birth) was more promptly crowned with success and granted in a more gracious manner. I wrote a simple letter in which I narrated my misfortune (without, however, mentioning any name) ; and a still more simple reply, expressed in a far more gracious style than I deserved, and containing my pension bearing the date of my letter from Mittau, was what I received from Mr. Pitt. Verily it would be difficult to cite a more delicate act of attention. I much regret the loss of this Minister, to whom I owe such deep gratitude, and I consider his death a public calamity not only for England but for all Europe ; this, at least, is the opinion in Russia and more particularly here.

“ I had already done all that lay in my power to console the all too unfortunate—for the loss of his entire fortune. Although it was his own fault (at least as far as it concerned myself and my deceased sister) he deserves more pity than blame. Encourage him, my dearest friend, when you happen to see him or to write to him ; for I can guess what he is suffering by what I myself should feel if I were in his place. I, for my part, have forgotten everything, and I should wish him to do the same. I was never really crushed by this loss, so convinced was I that, if the worst

came to the worst, my royal friend would give me money at the first mention of that loss. Luckily I was not obliged to let him into the secret until I had received from the British government a satisfactory reply to my request ; and you can imagine what he said on learning of the fact.

“ Oh ! my beloved friend, how different are matters now to what they were when last you wrote to me ! How could we foresee all that has since come to pass ? Verily I never really expected very much from the principalities’ united efforts, although these were wisely combined, because nobody thought of paying any attention to the one method of securing complete success, a method which they even seemed anxious to ignore ; however, I was far from suspecting that the usurper would come out of the fray not only unhurt but really stronger than when he went in ; that, however, is what has happened, and we have to thank Austria for it. The Russian troops are still what they used to be : *without a rival, absolutely perfect. Unhappily for Europe, St. Petersburg is too far from Paris ; if it were otherwise, be assured, my dearest friend, that you would see peace promptly restored to the world and order re-established.*

“ I am much obliged to Dr. M’Carthy for his kind wishes ; if he cares for mine, tell him that I shall always remember him. What have become of the seminary at Toulouse and all the similar establishments you had in France ? Tell me something about them, please, in your next letter.

“ Adieu, my dearest friend ; remember me sometimes in the moments you spend with God, and rest assured that you will never have a more affectionate servant, a more sincere and more devoted friend than

“ HENRY EDGEWORTH.”

The year 1806 closed in gloom amid the thunder of battle and the cries of the wounded and dying. The country between the Vistula and the Niemen was the

scene of a great struggle between the French and the Russian troops, of whom the Abbé speaks so highly in the above letter.

Once more Louis was tormented with fears for his own safety. Now that he might again be obliged to flee, Mittau suddenly seemed to the unhappy monarch to be one of the most desirable spots on the face of the earth.

Spring comes late in Russia ; indeed, the Russians say that they have no spring, so sudden is the change from winter to summer. On a chilly morning in the month of April, 1807, a piteous little procession of French soldiers, members of the Grand Army who had been captured by the Czar's troops, dragged their weary limbs through the winding streets of Mittau on their way to the military prison. Eight of the thirty-one prisoners despatched from the battlefield had died on the road ; and of those who were now trudging along with bent heads and blood-stained garments, too ill and sick at heart to take any notice of the inhabitants, few would ever again see the emperor for whose sake they had left the pleasant land of France. On hearing that Frenchmen were lying sick in the prison of Mittau, the Abbé Edgeworth flung himself at the king's feet and implored him to let him go and nurse the poor prisoners. This permission Louis gave, generously forgetting that these very soldiers had probably fought against his house.

The Abbé went to the prison, and there, with the help of his servant Louis, nursed the wounded men night and day. Having emptied his own purse, he applied to the king for further means to carry on his good work, and this request was likewise granted.

Notwithstanding all his care and devotion, ten of his patients succumbed to their wounds and to the hospital fever which broke out owing to insanitary premises and soon carried off those of the prisoners who had been most fatigued by the long journey to Mittau and the privations attendant upon warfare in a hostile country. Fever had no terrors for the Abbé; his previous experiences must surely have made him inclined to believe in Fate. He who had so often escaped the guillotine was scarcely likely to be afraid of a mere fever. He redoubled his efforts to cheat Death of his prey and scarcely gave himself time to eat or sleep.

After some days the Abbé, who was never very robust, was seized with fits of shivering. For five days he continued to tend his patients and to suffer in silence, but on Sunday, May 17th, he was unable to conceal his condition any longer and he was recommended to stay in bed for a day or two. This, however, he would not do, "for," said he, "I cannot think of attending to my own slight maladies as long as there are so many sick to nurse."

On Monday morning he said mass as usual at seven o'clock, but later became so ill that he was obliged to lie down upon his bed—never to rise from it again.

On hearing of his illness, Madame Royale expressed her intention of going to nurse him. Having asked her uncle's permission and been told that if she went to the prison she might contract the same fever, she replied :

"The less he realises his need and position, the greater need he has of a friend. Even if everyone else feared the contagion, I would never abandon him who is more

than a friend to me—the noble and generous friend of my whole family, he who left his own family and country, all, all for our sake ! No ! nothing shall prevent me nursing the Abbé Edgeworth with my own hands ! I ask no one to help me.”

It was impossible to persuade the Duchesse d'Angoulême, when once she had entered that horrible building, to leave the room in which her father's confessor lay dying ; she gave him his medicine with her own hands and watched by his bedside night and day. The good Louis Bousset fell ill at the same time, but, being younger and stronger than his master, he was able to throw off the fever and quickly recovered. On Tuesday the Abbé's condition, though serious, was not yet altogether without hope of amelioration ; he was very weak owing to his refusal to spare himself in any way, and his mind wandered from time to time. The Archbishop of Rheims and the Marquis de Bonnay, his intimate friends, were constantly in and out of the sick-room.

On Thursday, during a moment of lucidity, he asked for paper and a pencil with which to write to his family ; he said he had something very important to say to them, but his strength failed him and he was obliged to relinquish the task.

Early on Friday morning he recognised the Archbishop of Rheims and wished him “ *bonjour* ” but towards midday his chest became much oppressed and his friends determined to administer the Last Sacraments to him. As often happens after such a ceremony, the dying man appeared to revive for a little ; but as evening fell the watchers saw that he was sinking, and shortly after eight

o'clock (May 22nd, 1807) he drew his last breath after an illness lasting only five days.

It was said that just before he died Madame Royale took his hand and, in a voice which scarcely trembled, cried :

“Depart, Christian soul ! go and receive the reward which awaits you.”

The fact that the Duchesse d'Angoulême did not contract the fever was considered nothing short of a miracle ; her own chaplain, after the Abbé Edgeworth's death, took his place and very soon perished a victim to his devotion.

The court of Louis XVIII. immediately went into mourning. As was meet for a man who throughout his life had always preferred to live in the background, the funeral was of the simplest ; the humble wooden coffin was followed by a little procession on foot composed of the Duc and the Duchesse d'Angoulême, the Archbishop of Rheims, the whole court, and several of the inhabitants of Mittau.

Louis XVIII. himself dictated the following letter, in which the Archbishop of Rheims announced the death of the Abbé Edgeworth to his brother Ussher.

“ SIR,

“ This letter, written by the hand of the Archbishop of Rheims, will inform you of the sad loss which we have just sustained. You have lost the most affectionate of brothers. I weep for a friend, a benefactor, a comforter who, having led the king, my brother, to the gates of heaven, has now shown me the road. The world was not worthy to possess him longer. Let us resign ourselves by remembering that he is now receiving the reward due

to his virtues ; and, as we are not forbidden to seek consolation, I offer you my deepest sympathy in the common misfortune caused by the death of your brother. It is indeed a public calamity ; my family, together with all the loyal Frenchmen around me, feel that they have lost a father, and our affliction is shared by all the inhabitants of Mittau. All classes, all religions met together at his funeral, and he was accompanied to his last resting-place amid expressions of sorrow and regret.

“ May this letter assuage your grief ! May I, in writing this, give a new proof of my veneration and affection for the most honourable of men. Be assured of all my sentiments of esteem for yourself and for the family of the Abbé Edgeworth.

“ LOUIS.”

One short sentence in the above letter shows what sort of man the Abbé Edgeworth was better than volumes of praise : “ All classes, *all religions* met together at his funeral.”

It was found after the Abbé's death that he had given away nearly everything he possessed. His clothes and furniture valued at £20 were bequeathed to Louis Bousset, together with two watches worth £15 or £20 each. His library, which contained about one hundred and fifty volumes chiefly concerning religion, was valued at £40 or £50. He likewise bequeathed to Louis Bousset 106 Dutch ducats (about £80), together with the arrears of his pensions from the Russian and English governments, amounting to £78 and £60 respectively. Besides these sums of money, he left at his bankers' a sum of 1,000 ducats and the late Czar's portrait set in diamonds, valued at 500 guineas ; these went to his relatives. A certain number of private papers and letters were discovered after his death and burnt.

By the wish of the Bourbon family a grand mass, followed by a touching funeral oration, was celebrated by the Abbé de Bouvens in the French chapel, King Street, Portman Square, July 27th, 1807. Louis himself wrote the epitaph of this most faithful servant of his house.

D. O. M.

Hic jacet

Reverendissimus vir Henricus Essex Edgeworth de Firmont, Sanctæ dei ecclesiæ sacerdos, vicarius generalis ecclesiæ parisiensis, etc., qui redemptoris nostri vestigia tenens oculus cæco, pes claudō, pater pauperum, mœrentium consolator fuit. Ludovicum XVI. ab impiis rebellibusque subditis morti deditum ad ultimum certamen roboravit, strenuoque martyri cœlos apertos ostendit. E manibus regicidarum mira dei protectione ereptus, Ludovico XVIII. eum ad se vocanti ultro accurrens ei per decem annos, regiæ ejus familiæ, nec non et fidelibus sodalibus, exemplar virtutum, levamen malorum sese præbuit. Per multas et varias regiones temporum calamitate actus, illi quem solum colebat semper similis, pertransit beneficiendo. Plenus tandem bonis operibus, obiit die 22 maii mensis anno domini 1807, ætatis vero suæ 62.

Requiescat in pace.

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